

CHECKERBOARD

99TH Regional Support Command

U.S. Army Reserve
Summer, 2001

Today's
Tough Missions
Demand Even
Tougher
Training!



FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome back to the best magazine in the Army Reserve – and don't you forget it! The *Checkerboard* exists to serve the soldiers of the command by bringing news from the field about training, special events and activities effecting soldiers, as well as their families and employers. And ... *we re* happy to serve *you*.

In this issue you find it's been a long, but meaningful summer, as 99TH troops took to every corner of our nation to train – to get better at their specific jobs – and to enhance their unit's overall mission readiness and capability.

Our units and soldiers are yet continuing overseas service assignments in Kosovo and Bosnia, so you'll hear how the peacekeeping mission in the Balkans is going, and even meet Master Sgt. Steve Opet, whose illustrations have been making our readers smile for more than a decade. His duty as a soldier serving in a hostile environment didn't force him to drop his pen, and we're thankful to have him safely home again.

Among this issue's pages, you'll read about a family using the Army's educational benefits to further their military careers and personal lives – a benefit far too few actually use, and how soldiers from the 5115TH Garrison Support Unit in Fort Meade, Md., first served as gracious hosts to visiting German Army officers, then represented the entire Army Reserve in the Inaugural Day Parade in Washington D.C.

As Brigadier General Karol Kennedy became the new Commander of the 99TH Regional Support Command, the command's soldiers loaded ships in Baltimore; "dug" archeological sites at Fort Drum, NY; taught military police takedown techniques in Japan; moved massive amounts of jet and diesel fuel during POLEX; and cooked field chow to new culinary heights, "garnishing" a few more Connelly Awards along the way.

Our bridging units showed off their stuff on the Arkansas River, impressing Army Reserve Ambassadors in attendance, and the 99TH's military police ran the gamut of training – from encountering terrorists to containing uprisings from enemy prisoners of war, to putting a lot of lead downrange on MK-19, 40 mm Grenade Launcher.

Soldiers will be sporting new headgear before you read this, but take the time to get the real "skinny" on the Army's evolutionary change to the black beret – a hat that quickly turned out to be both a new source of pride ... and pain. Illustrator Steve Opet and I took a closer look at how things may have once influenced earlier leaders on what may constitute appropriate cover for a warrior.

If you haven't heard, our Army is "hot" for officer candidates, and in an unrelated incident, we'll tell you how our firefighting engineers from Norristown, Pa., assisted in putting out fires at the Army's military academy at West Point, New York.

We revisit, after 10 years, the soldiers and families of the 14TH Quartermaster Detachment in Greensburg, Pa. The unit suffered the greatest number of casualties of Operation Desert Storm when a Scud missile hit the temporary barracks facility where the unit was being housed in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia on Feb. 25, 1991. More than a decade has now passed, but the 99TH is still honoring its own ... with a little help from our friends.

So set down your rucksack, charge your canteen cup with a fresh fill of hot coffee, loosen your bootlaces and set the summer's record *straight* – by checking out ... the *Checkerboard*!

— Jack Gordon, Editor



COMMAND GROUP

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Brig. Gen. Karol A. Kennedy

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Col. Michael R. Eyre

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Command Executive Officer
Mr. William Staub

Command Sergeant Major
CSM D. Courtney Griffin

CHECKERBOARD STAFF

Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Steven L. Harmon

PA Specialist/Editor
Mr. Jack Gordon

Contributors

Lt. Col. Denise McDonald, 5115TH GSU
Maj. Irene Zoppi, 5115TH GSU
Capt. Anthony Todd Carlisle, 354TH MPAD
Master Sgt. Steve Opet, 354TH MPAD
Master Sgt. Kelly Tyler, PAO, USARJ
Staff Sgt. Chuck Joseph, 354TH MPAD
Staff Sgt. Kelly Luster, 354TH MPAD
Staff Sgt. Sheila Tunney, PAO, 99TH RSC
Sgt. Chris Coleman, 354TH MPAD
Spc. Tina Beller, 326TH MPAD
Pvt. Mike Schuler, 354TH MPAD
J.S. Augustine (Reprinted by permission,
The Herald-Standard)
Carmen DiGiacomo, CMPO, 99TH RSC
Tony Johnson, PAO, USARC
Thomas Orme, 464TH TC
Stephanie Thum

ABOUT THE COVER

FRONT: Spc. Lynn Cornwell, 304TH MP Co., defends her area with a SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon) – her weapon of choice. (Jack Gordon)

BACK: Operation Desert Storm veteran Christopher McHugh is supported by his wife during the National Anthem at the 10-year memorial service for the 14TH QM Det., in Greensburg, Pa. McHugh suffers from Gulf War Syndrome. (Rich Gribenas)

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CHECKERBOARD

99TH Regional Support Command

U.S. Army Reserve



Jack Gordon

ALL SEALED UP ...

A soldier prepares to enter the gas chamber at Fort A.P. Hill, Va. – page 53.



Jack Gordon

IN THE CITY ...

Urban training enhances soldiers' ability to fight – page 32.



Jack Gordon

FOOD'S A' COOKIN'! ...

A food service specialist cleans her hands before "mess" duty – page 27.



Kelly Lester

WITH CAREFUL AIM ...

Paintball adds realism to field training – page 30.



Jack Gordon

MOBILE, ARMED AND READY! ...

Soldiers from the 220TH MP Brigade in the field – page 16.



Jack Gordon

IN THE "BELLY" ...

Soldiers from the 1176TH TTB listen to the load plan before "upload!"

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New Commander Recognizes



Brig. Gen.
Karol A. Kennedy

When I first came to the 99TH RSC four years ago, my goal was to see as many soldiers, in as many units, at as many sites as possible. Little did I realize what a daunting task I had engineered, or how difficult it would become during those years, as even more units and soldiers were added to our ranks.

That “site map” is yet in my office, offering quiet testimony to not only how much ground I have already covered, but also how much yet remains. With “four more years” during which I may realize my goal, I am once again mapping a course that will bring me closer to our soldiers, civilians, families, and community supporters where they live, train and work. I firmly believe that recognizing their dedication, excellence in achievement, and resourcing their hopes, dreams, and ambitions are the responsibilities of command.

Each one of you – every soldier in every unit – every family member and spouse – every employer supporting our soldiers is important.

In my travels throughout the command and to stateside and overseas training sites, I have witnessed the commitment and many achievements of our civilian employees and family members, some of whom are already at the unit well before the troops arrive for drill to stage welcome snacks and refreshments. They are truly volunteers whose support of our mission is critical to the 99TH soldier’s undivided attention in conducting the training required to achieve and maintain the high readiness standards we have achieved together – unit by unit – within the command. Sometimes that achievement is recognized collectively, such as the award of the “Best Family Support Program” to the 14TH Quartermaster Detachment. Our family support program has many heroes, including those faithfully carrying their daily family duties while soldiers from the 554TH AG (Postal), 307TH MP Co., and 372ND MP Co. are deployed to Kosovo and Bosnia. The 1215TH GSU volunteers – Pat Rissmiller, Jan Polasky, Joyce Brzyski, and Dawn Leach – have done a great job too. Bless you.

Our civilian workforce, whether military

technicians, Department of the Army civilians or contractors, is a critical part of the team who “soldier” day to day to ensure our force is supported in every conceivable way. They work long hours when the only compensation is a too often neglected “thank you” for a job well done – for a job done above and beyond the call. They “soldier” because they care and know the consequence of inaction or inefficiency is our soldiers and their families – and our veterans too – will not have the service and support so critical to their well-being.

Once during a briefing, a commander told me he had *some* very good soldiers. My response was “You have *all* very good soldiers, and your responsibility is to bring out the best in all of them

– by helping them set goals, knowing their strengths, working on their weaknesses, and inspiring them to take on challenges and tasks they never dreamed they could accomplish. Leaders who have told soldiers, “Go for it,” have

mentored soldiers to perform and compete with confidence; and with this attitude, they have achieved excellence and recognition both as soldiers and in their chosen, civilian careers.

Spc. Beverly Rhodes, 305TH MP Co., Big Bend, W. Va., the First Army runner-up for “Soldier of the Year,” was given the competition announcement and told by her command sergeant major to “Go for it”. She did, and she was successful. Spc. Jacob Dyer, assigned to the 1185TH Terminal Transportation Brigade, was the Military Traffic Management Command, soldier of the year. Master Sgt. Henry Wayne Johnson, of the 459TH Engineer Co., was honored as a recipient of the DeFleury Award, an honorary and distinguished recognition bestowed by the engineer association. Our own recruiter, Sgt. 1ST Class Kyle Upton was

named the TOP Warrant Officer Recruiter of the Army Reserve at the USARC Warrant Officer Conference.

Many of our soldiers have been recognized for outstanding achievements among their peers. 1ST Lt. Julie Stolzer, HQ, 99TH RSC – “went for it.” After applying for a direct commission, she was recognized for achieving the highest physical fitness score of her officer basic course at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, achieving a 390, and receiving the commander’s coin. Spc. Jeffrey Keller, 554TH AG (Postal) Detachment 3, Ripley, W. Va., was selected as distinguished honor graduate of his cycle and received an Army Achievement Medal for attaining a 99.5 percent during his Advanced

Your responsibility is to bring out the best in all of them — by helping them set goals, knowing their strengths, working on their weaknesses, and inspiring them to take on challenges and tasks they never dreamed they could accomplish.

Individual Training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He is currently deployed to Kosovo with the 554TH AG Co. from Ripley, W. Va. Second Lt. Michael Lay, 299TH Engineer Co., was selected as the 2001 U.S. Army Reserve Sturgis Engineer Award winner for outstanding contributions to military troop construction as a result of his technical skills and leadership ability.

Our 99TH units comprise these high performing, self-confident, *Army of One* soldiers, and we continue to achieve unprecedented successes in many areas. The 818TH Maintenance Co. was chosen as the Heavy MTOE Category winner at the 99TH RSC, then selected as one of the finalists in the entire Army Reserve. After performing a “hands-on” DA-level inspection at the unit, the soldiers of the 818TH won the runner-up

Excellence in 99TH Soldiers

Army Award for Maintenance Excellence for the Department of the Army. The 275TH Quartermaster Co. was the 99TH RSC Intermediate Level winner for the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence. The 814TH Quartermaster Co. ranked second in a multi-component competition among Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units (ROWPU) of multi-compo units.

I pinned the Army Achievement medal on the members of that four-soldier team of Sgt. Michael Geisick, Spc. Timothy Brown, Spc. Scott Quick, and Spc. Michael Albertson for their efforts. Their comment to me was "Next year – First place Ma'am!" The 464TH Transportation Company has won the USARC award for the year's best transportation unit and is now competing against the best transportation unit in the National Guard. The 254TH Quartermaster Co. was the USARC Northeast Region winner in the Connelly Evaluation. The unit has continued in field cooking excellence by being selected as runner-up in the new fiscal year competition.

Our public affairs writers and editors from the 354TH Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD) were recognized for producing the best field newspaper in the Army. Again ... not just in the Army Reserve, but in *the entire Army*! The soldiers from the 326TH MPAD were the first Army Reserve

unit to be assigned to the Kosovo Public Affairs mission. When they left, they too had shown the Army that its Reserve force is skilled, trained and ready. Their publication, *The Talon*, was recognized as the best, sustained publication in a deployed task

– earn achievement. The responsibility of leadership and focus on achievement is the foundation of solid teams in ready units.

Our fellow soldiers and their families sacrifice a great deal of time and energy to achieve what is

sometimes neither well understood nor fully appreciated by their fellow American citizens who enjoy the freedom of that dedicated service.

When I spoke to the USARC Deputy Commander, Maj. Gen. Craig Bambrough on the day before my official change of command ceremony, I confided I was a bit anxious and nervous. He counseled, "Just take a deep breath and think about how much difference you will be able to make for all of those soldiers, civilians and their families."

I have embraced that wise counsel and guidance, and I pledge to you now, that my next four years of service will be totally dedicated to *you* ... and to your families. I believe that "Soldiers lead to excellence – will lead units to readiness."

From the first day of my assignment in May of 1997, I have truly felt and communicated my position that the 99TH is the best RSC in the Army Reserve. We have the best units, soldiers, civilians and family support groups anywhere. I still believe this, and expect to recognize and celebrate your individual and shared achievements ... at every opportunity. ■



PASSING THE GUIDON ...

As Maj. Gen. Thomas A. Plewes passes the 99TH's colors to Brig. Gen. Karol A. Kennedy, she officially assumes command of the 99TH Regional Support Command.

force.

Often, all a soldier, team, or unit needs is a quiet nudge in the direction leading to challenging competition and excellence, or perhaps the example of accomplishment seen in his or her leaders, and the encouragement from them to continue the quest toward being the best. There is no greater reward for a leader than to see those who have been trained

SERGEANT'S BUSINESS



Command Sergeant
Major D. Courtney
Griffin

In my column in the previous issue of the *Checkerboard*, I discussed the importance of soldiers becoming duty-MOS qualified and completing the requisite level of NCOES for their rank. These two requirements should continue to be the primary focus of every soldier who

has not achieved them. For every NCO, your focus should be to ensure that each soldier in your squad, section, platoon, company, battalion, et cetera, is DMOSQ and NCOES qualified for his or her position, or making satisfactory progress toward achieving such qualification.

To quote our Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Ruddock, "... we expect, indeed we demand, that our soldiers æ *soldiers from the 99TH*, are trained and ready to respond at a moment's notice." That level of readiness, requires that every soldier must be able to perform his or her duty, as demonstrated by being DMOSQ. In addition, every noncommissioned officer must shoulder the responsibilities of his or her duty position and provide genuine leadership and be a caring mentor to the soldiers under his or her charge. I believe that most of the NCOs in the 99TH RSC genuinely

care about their soldiers and want to train and lead them. I am concerned, however, about our noncommissioned officers who are being conditionally promoted, then later reduced because they failed to meet their NCOES requirements. We, collectively as NCOs, must shoulder part of the blame for the problems of conditionally promoted soldiers who are being reduced. When we fail to train; when we fail to mentor; when we fail to be accountable for the success or failure of our subordinates; then we are partly to blame for that soldier's reduction.

However, I strongly believe that the lion's share of the blame for the reduction of a conditionally promoted soldier, lies squarely on the shoulder of that soldier. If anyone wants to see who is primarily responsible for their success or failure in life, they need only look into a mirror! NCOES courses are no exception. Only you can pass the APFT! Only you can ensure that you meet the height/weight standards of AR 600-9! Only you can meet the academic standards of the course! **You** have accepted the promotion. **You** must meet the conditions to keep those stripes!

If there is a legitimate reason why a soldier has failed to complete the requisite NCOES course within the allotted time period, and the delay is through no fault of the soldier, the suspense date can be extended. A request for extension of the suspense date, with documentation, should be

forwarded through the chain of command.

Conditional promotions are truly *Sergeants Business*. Don't look towards our commissioned officers for answers to any problems we might have with the NCO promotions. The problems and solutions are in *our* lane!

On May 5, 2001, Maj. Gen. Rodney D. Ruddock, Commanding General of the 99TH Regional Support Command, passed the command of the RSC on to Brig. Gen. (P) Karol Kennedy. He will then retire from the Army Reserve after a long and distinguished military career. It will be with heavy heart that I bid farewell to a great soldier and exceptional leader, for it was Maj. Gen. Ruddock who selected me to serve as your 99TH RSC Command Sergeant Major in January of 1999. For this exceptional career opportunity, I extend to him my heartfelt thanks and best wishes for his well-deserved retirement!

To Brig. Gen. (P) Kennedy, I extend my sincere congratulations for having been chosen to command the 99TH Regional Support Command, the best RSC in the Army Reserve! That Brig. Gen. (P) Kennedy has been selected to command the 99TH, speaks reams to her exceptional ability and outstanding accomplishments as an Army officer. I am truly honored that I can continue to serve as you 99TH RSC Command Sergeant Major under the able command of Brig. Gen. (P) Karol Kennedy, the first female general officer to command an RSC! ■

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Serving Without Tenure

by Chaplain (Col.) Gary N. Johnston

"It is not for you to complete the work, but neither are you free **to desist from doing it.** —Rabbi Tarfon

Nothing is as certain as change. A continuous and unrelenting evolution of the environment in which we work and live —and have our being — is certifiably guaranteed. Amid the turbulence it is helpful to believe that life moves in book-like fashion: one chapter ends, another begins. We organize our lives using linear thinking. The calculus of living is not complex: move from A to B to C to D to ... This is an important way to avoid being stressed, too involved or just plain confused about what we are doing at any particular time. In truth, I often counsel people to slow down and—"take one thing at a time" or to "stop trying to do too much at one time." In my religious tradition we refer to the teaching of Jesus: *Consider the lilies of the field —how they neither toil nor fret; yet they are arrayed in great splendor.* Every religious tradition has a similar principal. Count the blessings you have. Know your limitations.

And yet ... there sometimes creeps into our lives a sentiment that maybe life isn't quite so neat and sequential as we might like it to be. There are those things in each of our lives for which we have no "closure." The chapter on some experiences may become multiple volumes.

One such multi-volume lifetime experience is doing something because it is who we are. It is a calling—a longing to be involved in something that will never be completely done. Douglas Southall Freeman's biography of George Washington speaks of this lifelong calling. Freeman writes of Washington, "He was a patriot of conscious integrity and unassailable conduct who had given himself completely to the revolutionary cause and desired for himself the satisfaction of having done his utmost and of having won the approval of those whose esteem he put above every other reward. What he *was* he made of *himself* by will, by effort, by ambition and by perseverance. He had the needful strength and direction because he walked that 'straight line.'"

One word to describe this kind of lifetime service is *Patriot*. As Rabbi Tarfon would surely affirm, patriotism is not a work any of us ever completes, but neither are we free to desist from persevering in its path. It is with immense respect and goodwill that we bid farewell to Maj. Gen. Ruddock — a patriot whose work is not yet complete, and who will not desist from doing it, even after he leaves our ranks. May God bless! ■

DISPATCHES

326TH MPAD Becomes First Army Reserve Public Affairs Unit to Serve in Kosovo

by Seth Braverman

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo —“Thank you for being here. If you hadn’t, my family would be dead,” explained an Albanian man to Sgt. 1ST Class Douglas Neatrour as he prepared to depart Kosovo after a six month mobilization with the 326TH Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD). Just six months earlier, the 326TH, based in Reading, Pa., was notified that it would be mobilized in support of Operation Joint Guardian — the NATO peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. Their mission was two fold — to escort international media so that they could get their story and, secondly, to help tell the stories of the unyielding efforts of the 8,000 U.S. and international peacekeepers that comprised the U.S. sector known as Task Force Falcon.

“Doing this mission was a real eye opener. It was clear to me that we were doing good and helping people in extraordinary ways,” said Neatrour. You could see and feel it from both sides — Serbs and Albanians. It gave me a feeling of purpose and was worthy of the personal sacrifice that an Army Reserve soldier gives during a mobilization.

Deployed to Bosnia several years earlier, Neatrour could not help but compare the two missions. He explained the Army apparently learned a lot from its experiences in Bosnia and was now applying these to the Kosovo peacekeeping mission. “The Kosovo mobilization appeared to be more organized from the moment of deployment, and the living conditions are much better,” said Neatrour.

For many of the MPAD’s soldiers, however, it was their first deployment. Spc. Michael Nowinski volunteered for the mission out of a need to do something exciting and get an opportunity to work beside his active-duty counterparts. “We are completely integrated with the active army. They

welcomed us with open arms,” said Nowinski. “There was no way in telling us apart from our regular Army peers, and they respected us for the job we were doing. I gained a lot of new friends, not only U.S. but international as well!”

Aside from escorting major media outlets such as NBC, CBS, ABC, Reuters, Associated Press and MTV throughout the 2,500 square kilometer American sector, the 326TH also augmented Task Force Falcon’s command information program by publishing a professional quality newspaper, known as the *Falcon Flier*, which captured the daily activities and contributions of the task force’s soldiers.

“We produce the paper twice a month and you could tell when it was getting close to publication time because we would get a lot of calls from the troops wanting to know when the next issue was going to be distributed,” noted Staff Sgt. Donald Dodson, “the *Falcon Flier*’s assistant editor and designer. We also received e-mail from family members



WATCHING THE PERIMETER ...

Staff Sgt. Chuck Joseph, 354TH MPAD, stands watch at a security site in Kosovo.

stationed in Germany thanking us for placing the *Falcon Flier* on the world wide web because it allows them to stay current with what their loved ones are doing.

In total, the 326TH organized 83 media events, issued nearly a hundred press releases, escorted 217 media organizations and aired nearly 60 broadcast stories it created for the Armed Forces Network television station—more than any other unit of its type in the history of the Balkan operation. Both Task Force Falcon and United States Europe relied on the 326TH as experts in media affairs and embraced its ability to handle this important mission. Most impressive, perhaps, was the Department of the Army’s recognition of the 326TH by awarding it the prestigious Keith L. Ware award for journalism for the *Falcon Flier*. (continued on page 8)

(continued from page 7)

Task Force Falcon represents the U.S. contingent of peacekeepers in Kosovo. Its mission is to stabilize the region and make it “safe and secure,” said Lt. Col. Dave Hogg, Task Force Falcon’s operations officer. “When we first got here,” said Hogg, “the Albanians were retaliating against the Serb populace and the Serbs were fighting back. Now, the remaining Serb minority ‘hunkered down’ and is simply trying to exist as they did prior to Milosevic’s era of driving Serb dominance.”

Serbs continue to feel the pressure of ethnic intimidation which is as subtle as the obliteration of the Serb language on road signs, or as overt as grenade attacks and bombings against their residential and religious dwellings. Because they live in enclaves, their freedom of movement is very restricted. As a result, it is necessary for the military to escort convoys of Serbs in and out of Kosovo and even walk their children to school.

“We’re doing a lot to promote ethnic tolerance but the hatred between these two groups goes back thousands of years. The situation is similar to the Israelis and the Arabs,” said Hogg.

Although NATO liberated Kosovo from Serb

military occupation during the air war, both ethnic groups seem to appreciate our presence. Not surprisingly, the Albanians credit the U.S. with driving the Serb military out of Kosovo so that they could return to their homes after their mass exodus. However, the remaining Serb population wants us here because we protect them from Albanian retribution and retaliatory attacks.

The headquarters for Task Force Falcon here dominates a hillside just outside of the town of Urosevac/Ferizaj. This sprawling base is home to nearly 3,500 U.S. and foreign troops. Ringed by concertina wire and a distant mountain chain that is punctuated by the majestic “Big Duke” mountain that clouds infrequently relinquish to view. The encampment is abuzz with the continuous drone of helicopters and military transports and is reminiscent of fire bases of the Vietnam era.

Aside from serving as headquarters, the installation also functions as a support base to U.S. and international forces serving in the U.S. sector. These troops work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to make Kosovo a peaceful place to live. Most of what goes on takes place outside of here where thousands of soldiers conduct hundreds of patrols

throughout the sector. Many of these soldiers live in satellite camps, and provide security to dozens of sites such as Serb churches schools and homes.

According to Hogg, there are signs of progress. For instance, Serbs are now being employed at an Albanian-run mine. Also, we’ve seen Serb agricultural products such as livestock and grain accepted at Albanian cooperatives. “It’s getting better every day but they’re a long way off from having barbecues together,” he said.

Because of the inherent dangers associated with the conduct of these operations, the peacekeepers are required to exercise adequate force protection measures and are outfitted with weapons, flak jackets and helmets. Recent incidents of small-arms fire, directed against peacekeepers, reinforces the measures the soldiers must take to protect themselves. “I’ll never forget the time I was instructed ‘put on your helmets and flak vests and lock a magazine into your weapons,’” recalls Spc. Anthony Cross, administrative specialist for the 326th. “Hearing those words caused me to reflect on the serious meaning of the decision I made to enlist and take the oath to become an American soldier!” ■

Soldier’s Close Encounter with Bear Adds to Training Lessons in Field

by Jack Gordon

FORT DRUM, NY – Soldiers from the 307th Military Police Co. had quite a day during their annual training here when a large, black bear, apparently attracted by the food left in trash bags, stopped by for a little snack.

“I came back to the area to get my stuff and I noticed one of my bags was mauled,” said Pvt. Shelton Stewart. “I thought it was a raccoon, but when I was about 10 feet away from my rucksack ... I saw the bear.

“I pulled out my knife ... then slowly began to back up toward my platoon CP (Command Post),” Stewart said. I put the word out that we had a bear, and we watched him moving around the area.”

And what a bear – First Sgt. Robert Mervosh estimated the black bear to be in the 300-pound range. The bear was unafraid of human presence, and strolled—or lumbered—slowly around the bivouac site as the platoon prepared to move to another location in accordance with mission orders.



(Still image from video)

“There are quite a few around,” Mervosh said. “When you’re in the field, they pick up the smell of the food in the air, so they come around. It’s a lesson-learned for us about keeping trash in the AO (Area of Operations).”

Mervosh said he felt the bear was a male, since males tend to be bigger than females, and usually have larger, broader heads, adding that he wasn’t about to go up to the bear “to check its gender.” Safety, in fact, was the order of the close encounter episode, and although the soldiers were treated to a fenceless zoo of sorts, everyone was all too aware that a charging bear can

easily outrun a human being, so soldiers kept a wary eye on the brute, who left the camp with a belly full of “pogey-bait.”

“He got some Spaghetti-Os, a bunch of cookies and crackers,” Stewart said, “and he actually ate my tube of toothpaste. I guess he wanted fresh breath when he went back in the woods.” ■

Opportunity for “Free” Education is “All in the Family” for These 99TH RSC Soldiers

by Kelly Luster

As a journalist in the United States Army Reserve, one of the most common questions I ask soldiers is, “Why did you join the Army?” Answers vary from patriotic duty to following in a family member’s footsteps to a way to travel the world. But by far, the most common answer to my query has been, “I needed money for college.”

When I enlisted in 1986, money for education was too one of my main reasons. Even though my contract stated I had several benefits for schooling, I was young and inexperienced, so I didn’t fully comprehend exactly what was available to me. Now, 14 years later, my eyes are opening to a wealth of information about educational “perks” for soldiers of all ages and ranks. Whether you just joined or are a seasoned veteran, knowledge about how you may further your education with Army Reserve educational benefits will help you.

Being a soldier in the Army Reserve means you may be eligible for a number of education programs. Some of the programs are: Health Professional Loan Repayment Plan; New Specialized Training Assistance Program for Medical Corps and Nurse Corps Officers; Distance Learning Tuition Assistance Program; Traditional Tuition Assistance Program (Beginning 1 Oct., 2000), Montgomery G.I. Bill; and the Student Loan Repayment Program. All of the preceding programs, however, may not be available to all soldiers. To find out if any could help you, contact the 99TH Regional Support Command’s Educational Services Specialist. Some of you reading this article may now be wondering what or who that is.

Mary Kunco, 99TH RSC Education Service Specialist, may be reached by calling: 800-567-9518 or 724-693-2313, and also by email at: Mary.Kunco@usarc-emh2.army.mil. According to Mary, her job is “to help our soldiers with their educational questions, concerns and problems.” She also runs a “testing site” for soldiers.

Think back to those final years in high school when everyone seemed to be taking Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT), or when you decided to join the service and had to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). Mary is authorized to administer these tests and more. By taking them at her test site you can alleviate some of the pressures of taking the test in large groups. Soldiers who improve their ASVAB scores may gain promotion points or be able to change their military occupational specialty.

For those in college now, you probably recognize the term CLEP. College

Level Examination Program tests and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests are exams that test college level knowledge you may have gained through travel, work, reading or hobbies. Rather than sitting in classroom rehashing information you already know, give Mary a call and see if you can test “out” of certain subjects. Oh, and by the way, I almost forgot to tell you the most important fact – most are *free*.

Chief Warrant Officer Harvey Cole Jr., a security intelligence officer at HQ, 99TH RSC, is taking advantage of the education benefits of the USAR. According to Cole, he heard CLEP tests were available and decided to check

into the program. What he discovered was more than he expected – the CLEP program was also available to his wife, Elaine, even though she is not a soldier in the Army Reserve. Elaine said she is taking about nine credits per semester at college and the CLEP program through the USAR will allow her to finish sooner than she expected. Also, Cole and his wife both feel that testing at the 99TH’s education office is much less stressful than testing elsewhere. So far the Coles have completed seven tests.

New soldiers, as well as those who have served for years can make use of the education office. Sgt. 1ST Class John Erwin Whitlatch, 99TH RSC Retention Office, said he has been telling people about all the things the Army Reserve can do for them, but it wasn’t until he started checking for his son that he realized just how much is there. “When my son joined, I started digging and found some things I didn’t really know were there.” According to Whitlock, he

found tests and programs that will benefit him as well as his son.

Pvt. John Christopher Whitlatch, who hasn’t yet finished high school, enlisted as a food service specialist in the 14TH Quartermaster Detachment, Greensburg, Pa., and is letting the Army Reserve help him with his education. “While my classmates are sitting in huge rooms taking their SATs with dozens of other people, I’m taking it in a more relaxed atmosphere. The best part of all it is that it’s free.”

So whether you’re a soldier with 14 years or fresh off the “block,” the education office can help you, as it is now helping Sgt. 1ST Class and Pvt. Whitlatch, and the Coles. You may only need a few credits to complete an Associates, Bachelors, or even Masters degree and for whatever reason – stopped trying. Believe it or not, it’s not too late. There are programs available that could help you. So call the education office and find out what they can do to help, because there is no better feeling than walking across a stage and someone handing you a “sheepskin.” What’s the worst that can happen – you might *learn* something. ■



TESTING FOR FREE ...

Family member Elaine Cole (front), and CW2 Harvey Cole Jr. take tests in the 99TH’s Education Office, free of charge.

NCO's Art Work Balances Life of a Deployed Soldier

by Anthony Todd Carlisle

Master Sgt. Steve Opet is a noncommissioned officer and a gentleman. He's also an accomplished artist.

Opet's renderings are sprinkled upon the walls of offices throughout the 99TH Regional Support Command in such forms as the command's calendar, the *Checkerboard* magazine and personal portraits and caricatures of other soldiers. Opet's artworks also have appeared in national publications. The master sergeant has won more than 60 awards in the last 15 years in art shows; and he's also the recipient of several Keith L. Ware awards for journalism excellence in illustration for military publications.

Opet said although he's received many accolades and awards for his drawings, he creates out of the pure enjoyment of art.

"There's a pleasure and sense of accomplishment I feel when I'm working on a piece, when I complete one, and the pleasure it brings to others," Opet said.

His love of art is something that started at a young age. Now 47, Opet said he started drawing when he was five years old.

"My mom used to draw pictures so I could color them," said Opet, first sergeant of Oakdale-based 354TH Mobile Public Affairs Det. "She's the one who got me hooked on drawing. I just drew all the time from that point on. So, you can say that I'm sort of self-taught."

Opet attended The Art Institute of Pittsburgh, where he was taught the more technical elements of art. His work is influence by realists, such as Norman Rockwell. Opet also has a great regard for early Impressionist painters.

"I sort of use that once in a while for some of my backgrounds," Opet said, referring to the soft-edged technique used by the masters of the Impressionist Movement.

Opet also incorporates his civilian job as a steelworker at Weirton Steel as inspiration in his artwork. He also once worked as a photographer for the Weirton *Daily Times*.

"There are a lot of striking visuals in the steel industry that likens it to art — the abstract forms of girders and beams intersecting in the huge shell of the Basic Oxygen Plant, the power and hell-red glow of the blast furnaces pouring white-hot molten iron into the ladle cares, the highly reflective, glossy smoothness on a coil of tin," he said.

Opet's wife Pegeen said her husband also has an eye for the mundane. "His vision is slightly off. It's quirky," Pegeen said. "When he looks at something, he sees it differently from regular people. I mean that in a good way."



THE CARTOON MAN...
Master Sgt. Steve Opet sketches caricatures of soldiers serving in Kosovo.

NO ROOM LEFT...
A parody of Norman Rockwell's sailor, Opet lists some of the Army's deployments in this cartoon.



Illustration by Steve Opet

Two of her favorite drawings by her husband are one with his grandmother sitting in the backseat of a car, and one of Pegeen's niece.

"My niece looks like Venus rising from the sea," Pegeen said. "He's so talented I can't stand it. I can't draw a straight line with a ruler. He can make something beautiful out of nothing."

Opet said the serious drawings he does for exhibits are the pieces that give him the most pleasure. He also loves to do caricatures, but that's mostly commissioned work. He's done several World War II-era drawings, some of his uncles in uniform. Opet said the creative process is a long one.

"I don't have time to sit down and draw a picture to completion," he said. "A picture might take me several months to complete. My larger pieces take about 30 hours." For reference, Opet often uses old photographs.

"I draw a rough overall sketch in pencil to get proportions right, add more detail in pencil, then render it in black and white with a ball point pen," he said. "The background is usually charcoal, and I like to add a touch of spot color using a vibrant watercolor."

Opet said he couldn't imagine a life without art. In fact, he said he wouldn't stop drawing unless he went blind. And if that occurred, Opet said he would go back to sculpting. So, how did an artist come to join the Army Reserve?

Opet enlisted in 1983 after he was laid off from Weirton Steel in West Virginia. Pegeen needed surgery, so he joined for the medical benefits. He started out as a personnel records specialist, later joined the 354TH and became a journalist, and did a



Gary Goodman

SERVING IN KOSOVO ...
Master Sgt. Steve Opet standing watch at a church in Kosovo.

three-year AGR tour with the 99TH (ARCOM) headquarter as an illustrator.

Opet said it didn't take long for him to realize he had made the right choice by joining the Army Reserve.

"I found out I really like the Army æ the sense of belonging to a special club that not everyone belongs to," Opet said.

Through his years of service in the military, Opet has received several awards: the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, National Defense Ribbon and Army Reserve Component Overseas Deployment Ribbon.

Currently, Opet's military career has taken him to Kosovo, where he is serving as part of the peacekeeping mission in the Balkans. Opet said he's adapted well in Kosovo, even though he hasn't had much time for his art.

"The feeling we are helping a people who were victims of ethnic cleansing and are now back home makes me feel like I'm helping in a great endeavor," Opet said. "The children all yell and wave, and the adults smile and wave too. It's great."

Pegeen said she was sad when her husband had to leave for Kosovo, but she understood his call to duty.

"He's paying back something to the Army," Pegeen said. "The Army has been good to us over the years. He's doing what he has to do."

Pegeen also contends that as great as her husband is as an

artist, he's an even better soldier.

"As a soldier, there's none better," she said. "He is so glad to be serving his country. I'm proud of him." ■

5115TH Garrison Support Unit Hosts German Army Soldiers

by Denise McDonald

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – The German exchange began in the Fall of 1998, while soldiers from the 5115TH Garrison Support Unit (GSU) here were overseas conducting training with the 7TH ARCOM in Heidelberg, Germany. Colonel Anton Endrich, commander of the 22ND Logistics Regiment and a full-time university professor, approached the commander about developing a working relationship with a U.S. Army Reserve Unit.

Col. Michael T. Masnik, commander of the 5115TH GSU, scheduled the first meeting with Col. Endrich in October to plan their joint relationship. Common interests were quickly found. The first endeavor had the 5115TH GSU participating in a joint, mountain training event organized by the German Reserve unit in the Black Forest. The soldiers of both Armies stayed in a German Basic Training Camp, in barracks, and ate breakfast in their mess hall. The “Black Forest March” was done at a grueling quick pace - all 30 kilometers of it! The soldiers climbed to the highest point in the Black Forest. There was a desire for all participants to meet again, but this time in the United States.

In June, the German soldiers arrived at Dulles International airport, for what would become a two- week adventure for both the 5115TH soldiers and their visitors. Seven German soldiers from the 22nd Logistics Regiment took part in the counterpart training. The three German officers and four sergeants major were Oberst (Col.) Anton Endrich, Oberstleutnant (Lt. Col.) Hans-Peter Nufer, Hauptmann (Capt.) Walter Buehler, SgtM Joachim Waible, SgtM Reiner Melchior, SgtM Eugen Wiest, and SgtM Udo Jung.

Because the Germans were interested in American history, their travel itinerary included many historical points of interest, including Gettysburg, Ft. McHenry, West Point and the U.S. Naval Academy. Other activities included the Smithsonian museums, Flag Day, the Army’s 225TH birthday celebration and speech by Brig. Gen. Gilley, a Volksmarch on the Blue Ridge, Appalachian Trail, a visit to Aberdeen Proving Grounds, and a sight-seeing journey in New York City.

Master Sgt. Steven L. Quick, a 5115TH soldier, narrated a staff ride and a

tour of the battlefield at Gettysburg, Pa. Dressed in a Confederate uniform, Quick began the tour with a review of how the Confederate and Union armies met on the first day of the battle. He showed the location where Union Gen. Reynolds was killed by a Confederate sharpshooter a few hours after the fight began. The German visitors were especially impressed by the ground defended by Union Col. Chamberlain and the legendary 20th Maine Infantry Regiment.

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington, Va., the Germans were in awe as to how Americans gave such honor to soldiers with no history. They were particularly interested in the tribute to women in the military, because until July 1, 2000, no women served in the German Army. A tour of the Veteran’s Outreach Center in Baltimore revealed some major differences in the two militaries. In the German Army, there is no support for veterans once their military tenure is over.

The second week began with a tour of the Aberdeen Proving Grounds Ordnance Museum, and a trip to New York. On the ride to the West Point Military Academy, Staff Sgt. Sherbert Noel, a soldier of the 5115th GSU Military Police section, escorted the group to an area that was more conducive to getting the best view of Manhattan’s skyline. Everywhere they went they were stopped by German Americans who recognized their uniforms, and they were happy to see a familiar face in a foreign land.

Arriving back in Baltimore, the group drove down to Annapolis and toured the U.S. Naval Academy. The Germans loved the Baltimore Inner Harbor and especially the Baltimore Brewing Company ... because the beer reminded them of home.

“I was most impressed with their uniforms and the way they were able to explain every little symbol on each emblem, down to the explanation of the color,” Staff Sgt. Sylvia Jackson said. After sharing talks about single parenthood and day care, which does not exist in Germany, Sgt. Michelle Larry also connected with several of the soldiers on a personal level. Several of them remain in contact via e-mail. Finally, there was a fond farewell. The Germans departed for their homeland with hopes that everyone would meet again ... Auf Wiedersehen! ... “I’ll be seeing you!” ■



photo courtesy of 5115TH GSU

A GREAT TIME ...

Sgt. Maj. Reiner Melchior (left) and Lt. Col. Haus-Peter Nufer review photographs of their visit to America.

1176TH Terminal Transportation Brigade

“Loading the Ship” – before “Shipping the Load!”

You can't load a ship by talking about it – you have to practice, so soldiers from the 1176TH Terminal Transportation Brigade train “for real” at every available opportunity, including this weekend drill. At the Port of Baltimore, the troops used vehicles from the state's National Guard to help them learn the “ropes” ... and the rigging, to safely and efficiently load a ship.

photo essay by Jack Gordon



Kennedy Becomes First Female RSC Commander

by Jack Gordon

HQ, 99TH RSC, Oakdale, Pa. – The skies above are a bright blue, and the future looks equally as bright for Brig. Gen. Karol A. Kennedy, the new commander of the 99TH RSC, and the first female soldier to have earned appointment to one of the 12 prestigious positions in the entire Army Reserve.

“I am proud to be here serving with you,” said Kennedy. When my son was growing up, he was often taunted with the phrase ‘Your mother wears combat boots.’ His proud reply was ‘Yeah ... doesn’t yours?’”

Kennedy said she is proud to be the first female selected to command a regional support command, but doesn’t want to be pigeonholed into merely being known as the woman commander. She, as any officer in the running for the position, was chosen based upon her accomplishments and potential promise to lead at an even greater level of responsibility and authority.

“She has been part of the success plan of the 99TH,” said departing 99TH Commander Maj. Gen. Rodney D. Ruddock. “She is up to the job.”

Kennedy has already served four years in the 99TH and is well aware of the command’s strengths and shortfalls. Her service as deputy commander has allowed insight into the 25,000 soldiers now serving under her command.

“I want to embrace all of you as a family,” said Kennedy, “the family of the Army, Army Reserve, and the 99TH Regional Support Command—an extended family of support. The emphasis is ... and will be ... on soldiers.”

Kennedy is looking toward tomorrow, as the soldiers of the 99TH continue a tradition.

“The patch you are wearing is honorable,” Kennedy said. “As your duty takes you to places around the nation and elsewhere – you will be recognized!” ■



Jack Gordon

SHE’S THE ONE ...

Brig. Gen. Karol A. Kennedy becomes the first female commander of a Regional Support Command.



Jack Gordon

CHANGE OF COMMAND ...

The Headquarters Company of the 99TH, led by Chief of Staff Col. Robert Cardamone, conducts the ceremony with every 99TH unit assigned to the command represented.



Chris Coleman

A NEW ERA ...

As Kennedy addresses her unit commanders for the first time – her intentions are clear.

“Marchin’ Down the Avenue ...” *Pennsylvania Avenue – that is.*

5115TH GSU Soldiers Featured in Inaugural Parade

by Irene Zoppi

Fort George G. Meade, Md. – There are many times when feelings of pride and honor fill a soldier’s heart but an occasion like a Presidential Inauguration is a unique moment in history. For the soldiers of the 5115TH U.S. Garrison Support Unit (GSU), 323RD Military Intelligence Bn. and Det. 1, 99TH Regional Support Command, it is their time in history as they march down the Pennsylvania Avenue to honor the new president and commander in chief, George W. Bush.

It is with pride and honor that soldiers from the 5115TH GSU, and attached personnel from 323RD MI Bn. and Det. 1, 99TH RSC, here received news they had been selected to represent the entire U.S. Army Reserve in honor of the new commander in chief by marching in the Inaugural Parade.

With only two weeks notice to prepare for this mission, the 5115TH took the tasking, prepared, and were ready to march on the early morning of Jan. 20, 2001. As the troops stood in formation and prepared for departure, a grand and exciting spirit of excellence was evident.

“We look sharp and are ready to represent the U.S. Army Reserve”, said Pvt.2 Tarah Brown, a member of the marching unit. For 2ND Lt. Julia Tyler, the event was the culmination of everyone’s hard work.

“We practiced, practiced, and practiced ... we are ready.” The soldiers’ high level of motivation and the excitement of making history was virtually impossible to miss. Everyone in the audience could feel the prestige of the soldiers.

An “Army of One,” said Commander Col. Michael Masnik, addressing his troops before their movement to the Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C.

In a motivational speech, Masnik addressed the soldiers, providing guidance and words of inspiration that filled the drill hall. The 5115TH had been chosen for many reasons – the unit’s proximity to Washington, D.C., its mission to provide state funeral support and, because of the unit’s ability to accomplish difficult missions on short notice, Masnik said.

“Let’s go and make history,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Sinclair, senior non-commissioned officer, as the troops loaded the buses in the morning. As the buses departed, there was first a solemn silence and then, a sudden but sound harmonious “HOO-AH!” came out of the soldiers as the American flag waved, by retired Sgt. Maj. Raymond J. Moran, bid the group a farewell. Moran shouted the words that would echo in the minds of each and every soldier during the trip to the Pentagon, “You are the best!”

“Doing their best is what the 5115TH GSU does best,” said First Sgt. Michael Ramsey, the unit’s first sergeant. For many soldiers, having an opportunity to talk to the media about their experiences as Reserve soldiers is a dream that rarely comes true. But for many soldiers from the 5115TH GSU, their dream did come true – when they were interviewed by major local and national news broadcast outlets, and met celebrities like Pat Sajak, Earl Roker, and Robert Conrad.

But the ultimate celebrity, the president and commander in chief made the experience complete. Officially sworn in as the 43RD President of the United States, President Bush saluted the 5115TH GSU soldiers who marched in his honor. The soldiers marched down from Pennsylvania Avenue, through

the Capitol to the White House, and into history as the parade announcer sounded off, “Representing the United States Army Reserve is the 5115TH Garrison Support Unit, 99TH Regional Support Command, from Fort Meade, Maryland.” ■



photo courtesy of 5115TH GSU

THE LONG MARCH ...

Soldiers from the 5115TH GSU align their ranks to begin the parade.

COPS!

354TH Mobile Public Affairs Commander Conducts Police Training for MPs during Overseas Deployment in Japan

by Mike Schuler

AIBANO TRAINING AREA, Japan – Proper training is a must for anyone to do their job well, and here during Keen Sword 2001, Army Reserve soldiers from the 414TH Military Police Co. from Joplin, Mos. Got a little extra training to better prepare them for situations they may one day have to face.

Major Dennis Dudley, 354TH Mobile Public Affairs Det. Commander, was here to teach the MPs a few “tricks of the trade.” Dudley is a law enforcement officer for the Frederick, Md. Police department.

Tactics on how to properly and safely restrain uncooperative persons, safe uses of a baton, use of handcuffs, and how to properly approach suspects were part of the exercise.

Also included in the training was a discussion of when force is necessary, and when an MP may need to use pepper spray or their side arm.

According to Dudley, these techniques (many of which are derived from Asian martial arts) are not only designed to protect the arresting officer from injury, but the suspect as well. But no system is perfect, and people can and have been hurt using these types of physical restraints. By using these techniques, the possibility of such injuries is reduced.

These tactics allow a law enforcement officer, regardless of size, to restrain a person who may be much larger. Of course, it is important to remember that caution should always be exercised, especially if the suspect is armed, in which case Dudley said it’s important to keep distance or an object (such as a car) between the MPs and the suspect.

Another important topic discussed at the training was the proper tactics for a routine traffic stop. Dudley taught the soldiers how to question a suspect on the location of their license and registration. This is important if the driver would happen to have a weapon. This way a law enforcement officer can direct the person to get the identification papers needed and also protects the person being questioned from an officer who might mistake a sudden move for the glove box as a move for a weapon.

For the soldiers of the 414TH some of these



FASTER THAN FAST! ...

Maj. Dennis Dudley demonstrates a “Mach 1” take-down move on Pfc. Scott Worley.

restraints serve as a refresher from MP school, but many are new techniques these MPs have never seen before since they are primarily used by civilian law enforcement agencies.

“This helped me as an MP to learn different techniques in order to subdue someone in a given situation,” Spc. Tom Williams, MP, 414TH, said. “At MP school we go over maneuvers, but it’s different from the training we learned here.

“At MP school they teach us how to get out of a situation, but this stuff is how to take control of a situation,” Williams said.

This is the first time for many of these soldiers to work the law and order aspect of their duties. In 1998, the unit performed guard duty and as convoy escorts in El Salvador, and in 1999 they did similar work at West Point for their active duty training.

Sgt. Mike Abram, MP, 414TH, said the extent of their work before has mostly consisted of working traffic control points. This is the first time he has ever had to work law and order as an MP. So far everything has been going well and he hasn’t had to deal with any serious matters. Because these MPs are working the day shift, other soldiers from the task force are conducting field training and “not getting in trouble.”

So far Keen Sword has been uneventful for these MPs. “It’s been pretty quiet on the home front,” Staff Sgt. Jesse Vogel, 414TH, said of their current mission. None of the soldiers have reported any serious problems and have only had one instance of unsecured equipment.

That’s not to say things will always be peaceful in the daytime in the Land of the Rising Sun, so the Reserve soldiers are trying to stay prepared. Because none of the 414TH here works in law enforcement at their civilian jobs, extra training like this helps in retention for the military.

The MPs here hope they won’t have to be in that situation, and so far have not had any such problem. According to Staff Sgt. Michael Jones, just having the MP armband visible is usually enough to keep the peace.

“Just being there as a show of force and presence is usually enough,” Jones said. ■

That’s not to say things will always be peaceful in the daytime in the Land of the Rising Sun, so the Reserve soldiers are trying to stay prepared.

99TH Soldier “Digs” Archeologic Site at Fort Drum Annual Training

“Dig It?”

by Jack Gordon

FORT DRUM, NY – First Lt. Wes Sumner, 220TH MP Bde., Gaithersburg, Md., is getting a pleasant surprise during the unit’s annual training here – an opportunity to get an inside look at how Uncle Sam is examining America’s past – through ongoing archeological excavations at historic sites. Dr. Laurie Rich is head of the Cultural Resources Program sponsored by Colorado State University, and sanctioned here to explore what clues left from early settlements can tell about how the area evolved.

“It’s all about gaining a better understanding of the life ways that occurred then,” Rich said. “Fort Drum is a significant location for native American inhabitants. There is evidence here that humans were living here 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. The most ‘recent’ settlements in the area were those of the Iroquois in the 1400s.”

Rich said the research helps historians better understand evolution and how America was first explored. She believes that there were societies more complex and capable already here before the great movement across the “Bering land bridge,” and that boats were built and used much more extensively than what was originally thought.

“The sophistication of some of these early cultures is really amazing,” said Rich, who first came to Fort Drum in 1992 to establish laboratories and storage areas for the studies about to occur. She left in 1994 and returned in 1998 to initiate the program and develop long range planning. She welcomes the chance to share methods and research with a fellow archeologist, especially a soldier like Sumner.

“For him, it’s exposure to a new program in a different region using different techniques and decision strategies,” Rich said. “He’ll be able to compare and take some of this home with him.” Sumner is an intern for the Montgomery County Parks and Planning Commission in Montgomery County, Md.

“In my capacity with the unit, I’m in civil affairs,” Sumner explained. “Part of what we do is work with the host nation population with natural resources and historic sites, so this is very exciting for me.”

The site Rich has brought Sumner to see is one of more than a dozen active archeological excavations currently underway here.

“It was a dwelling – probably seasonal. We can see where the support structure posts were in the ground, and the hearth just outside the door.



LONG, LONG, AGO ...

First Lt. Wes Sumner (left), and Dr. Laurie Rich discuss the site of an early settlement in one of Fort Drum’s training areas.



HE “DIGS” IT ...

First Lt. Wes Sumner (left), and a contract “digger” carefully remove a layer of history from the archeological excavation site.

The inhabitants were intensively attempting to make stone tools. We’ve found several thousand bits of stone tool debris – the by-product of such manufacturing.” Rich also noted the discovery of several pointed projectile fragments, further confirming her belief.

“A lot of the sites like this are well-preserved

since there hasn’t been a great deal of heavy armor traveling over them” Sumner said. “They’re dealing with some of the same issues here as I do in Montgomery County, so it’s great for me to be able to see how the federal government and Department of Defense is working these situations.”

Rich said there are sites here she believes will provide valuable information and insight into how this region developed.

“One of the ideas we’re pursuing is that the very early people had a much broader based economy that we previously thought. They were more than just hunters – they used the migratory birds, and I believe they were proficient in building watercraft,” Rich said. Some of the area here now was once underwater.

“I’m convinced there is a deeply-buried site here on the shore of a glacial lake,” Rich said. My dream is to discover an intact, sunken, well-preserved boat. I’m convinced there’s one here.”

Part of Sumner’s dream is now reality, as he sifts through the bright orange soil at this site. Sumner smiles. He “digs” it – this archeology gig. ■

MOCK LOAD UP – Soldiers Train with Air Force

by Sheila Tunney

WYOMING, Pa. – Sometimes you just don't have the whole C-130. If its wings are clipped, does it become useless? Does it become a tin behemoth in your back yard, a tool shed, a faded memory of a once glorious war machine soaring through the wild blue yonder?

Or does the Army Reserve take advantage of what's left?

Apparently, the 320TH Military Police Battalion, Ashley, Pa., chooses the latter. Thirty members of the battalion traveled here to the 92ND Aerial Port Squadron's back yard where such a wingless airplane rests. Both units are putting it back into "service," mock loading it with equipment in a unique joint service deployment training scenario.

The training benefits the 320TH soldiers—many of whom have never deployed to a combat theater—as well as their Air Force Reserve hosts who have a mission of supervising units engaged in aircraft loading and unloading operations. The training agreement was arranged on the Army's side by Sgt. Darrell Flowers, 320th movement NCO, who was very interested in taking advantage of the C-130 that was relegated to light duty outside the Air Force Reserve center.

"We have four teams here today. They'll be taught the proper techniques for loading vehicles onto aircraft, building and securing a pallet, and doing a center of balance in preparation for deployment," said Flowers. The 320TH troops were divided into four teams training in a four-station "round-robin" format.

"In an actual scenario, we would be involved in loading our vehicles and equipment on the planes. The Air Force is also benefiting from this training because the Air Force Reserve unit normally doesn't have cargo to train with," Flowers said.

Before loading onto the C-130, the 320TH's vehicles, a 2-ton truck and a humvee, 320TH teams supervised by 92ND airmen worked together, stripping the vehicles of protruding accessories. Mirrors were removed, along with exhaust stacks, the truck bed gating, and the canvas cover and support ribs. When the troops were finished, the humvee retained its shell-like appearance and relative size, but the 2-ton truck seemed to visually shrink to half its normal size, and looked, in a word, naked.

Once in the "natural" state, calculations were made to determine the vehicles' center of balance. A complex formula including vehicle length, width and weight factors is used to pinpoint the spot which is marked-off with duct tape or a chalk line. The vehicle is then precisely aligned with permanent markings inside the airplane's cabin.

The lack of precision in balancing the load on airplanes could result in

serious losses to the Army and the Air Force, and by being here today, the 320TH is at least familiarizing themselves with the loading process. They are also learning the proper way to put together and secure pallets.

Guided by their Air Force counterparts, a team of five 320TH soldiers stand stretching a massive piece of plastic to cover a pallet with about six

cubic feet of equipment on it. In a gracefully coordinated movement the soldiers manage to catch the wind in the plastic like a sail, then in one fell swoop, blanket the items on the pallet. They also learned how to attach netting to secure the items into one solid block on the pallet.

"Putting the plastic and netting on the pallets takes a little bit of understanding – it's not just something you can throw together. If you do throw it together, and it doesn't meet the Air Force standard, then it doesn't make it on the aircraft. If it doesn't make it on the aircraft, and you have to leave it behind, then you're going to be short that equipment when you arrive overseas," said Cpt. Frank Simko, unit movement officer. Simko also said he's glad Flowers arranged this opportunity to train with the Air Force Reserve.

"There are some people in the unit that did mobilize, several times," Simko said, "But there are so many more new troops who have no concept of what's going to take place at the mob station. They're getting instruction to build-up.

"This gives them some idea of what it will take to get all our personnel and all our equipment on the plane and overseas to our

deployment area," said Simko.

The training will also test the interoperability between the two services during a deployment scenario.

"This actually replicates our mission to help load out the Army. We're fortunate to have the opportunity, because we don't have the resources (equipment) here to do this type of training," said Senior Master Sgt. Dave Hodges, a 92ND operations NCO. He said the unit usually only does actual loading during their annual training. Hodges worked with Flowers in orchestrating the mock loading opportunity.

Under his and Flowers' tutelage, the 320TH soldiers spent the whole day in the round-robin events which also included properly attaching vehicle ramps to the C-130's cargo door, driving the vehicles into the plane, and securing the vehicles with steel chain cargo locks.

The plane may look a little strange with its little stumps where outstretched wings used to be, but the inside retains all the elemental structures of a C-130. And though the craft will never again soar the wild blue yonder, by taking advantage of it as a prop, the 320TH MP Battalion and the 92ND Aerial Port Squadron have definitely made use of the behemoth in the back yard. ■

"In an actual scenario, We would be involved in loading our vehicles and equipment on the planes. The Air Force is also benefiting from this training because the Air Force Reserve unit normally doesn't have cargo to train with."

— Sgt. Darrell Flower

General Focused on Brigade Training Objectives

by Jack Gordon

FORT DRUM, NY – In between rocket and bombing runs of pairs of A-10 –“Warthog” aircraft, soldiers from units assigned to the 220TH Military Police Brigade are live firing on the MK-19 Automatic Grenade Launcher. As each HUMVEE along the ridge here blasts out short bursts of hot and heavy ordnance downrange, spotters with binoculars assess the accuracy of the gunners. This training marks the first opportunity many of these soldiers have had to fire their most powerful mobile weapon, and they are making the most from the experience. Also, they know someone ... is watching.

Brig. Gen. Ted Szakmary, commander, 220TH MP Bde., Gaithersburg, Md. is observing his soldiers. He's concerned about them getting the right kind of training, and that their training is properly focused for future missions.

“These soldiers are all from FSP (Force Support Package) 1 units,” Szakmary said. “They take training seriously.” FSP 1 units are those that will be the first called in the event of a rapid response from America's Army. They are the elite of today's Army Reserve, and the 220TH represents a tremendous force in trained MPs.

The brigade has several of its subordinate elements represented here, with most of the 336TH Bn., 304TH and 307TH MP companies; a provisional company from the 363RD and 352ND MP companies; and elements of the 88TH MP Co. Szakmary said he was trying to maintain each unit's integrity when possible, and that this year's training marked a rare year that so many of the brigade's units were actually conducting joint training. The overland deployment to Fort Drum seems to have offered a number of added benefits as well.

“We conducted road convoys to get here,” said Szakmary, “and our drivers are getting a lot of wheel time. We're covering realistic road distances” – and we're exercising our vehicles and equipment.”

Lanes training presented another test for some of the units.

“We have three lanes evaluations this year,” said 307TH Mp Co. First Sgt. Robert Mervosh, “secure and defend a critical site; route recon; and convoy

security. We passed all three the first round.” Mervosh said overall conditions were good.

“Morale has been high” – the food is good. I can't really complain about anything except the bugs.”

Maybe the bugs are part of the plan though, since Szakmary likes seeing his soldiers performing what he calls “fieldcraft,” like coping with adverse weather, terrain and conditions that present problems for leadership ... and that ... is definitely part of the plan.

First Lt. David Henry, also from the 307TH, said he was using scenarios where the leaders were “taken out” of the training as casualties.

“It's given our squad leaders and team leaders a chance to step up and see what they've got,” said Henry. “The response so far has been good.”

Learning forms the essence of good training, and allows errors to be made – and answers to those errors formulated so the real thing can be performed flawlessly if its required, and everybody here is learning, even if its in a “fog.”

“Two squads had me pinned down, so I popped some white smoke,” said Staff Sgt. Shawn Russo. “Then I ‘popped’ a couple of them as they came through looking for me. It's a lesson that concealment isn't always cover.”

Szakmary is relishing this time, where field crafts must be honed; especially since the soldiers serving in the brigade headquarters seldom are up front in the mud, as they are here now.

“As a brigade headquarters, our mission is not necessarily fighting the fight” – but more being able to direct the fight,” Szakmary said. “We're taking our time, step-by-step. I asked a group of about 40 soldiers how many of them were here five years ago – only one raised his hand.

“There is a hell of a lot of good training going on here,” Szakmary said, as the aerial ballets of overhead A-10s continued peppering the range with hot metal. As

Szakmary watched the smoke rising from the air strikes, I asked him to briefly outline his intent for the exercises here. Two more rockets hit paydirt downrange. Szakmary paused.

“Battle focus,” he replied. “Training as we will fight ... and taking care of soldiers – taking care of soldiers— taking care of soldiers!” All three are occurring here ... ask any soldier. ■



FOCUSED ON BATTLE ...

Brig. Gen. Ted Szakmary keeps a watchful eye on his soldiers – MPs from units assigned to the 220TH MP Brigade.

Army Reserve Soldiers Now Helping “Bury Private Ryan”

by Chris Coleman

Oakdale, Pa. – In 1997, faced with a staggering increase in the number of veterans passing away daily, the Army was forced to scale back the support of military burials to only what was required by regulation: full honors for active military members, Medal of Honor recipients and 20-year retired reserve soldiers. This tragic policy decision meant the loved ones of many military members might not hear the poignant notes of *Taps* or hear the words the soldier’s had earned: “On behalf of the President of the United States and a grateful nation, I present this flag as a token of appreciation for honorable and faithful service rendered by your loved one.”

With 1500 to 1700 World War II veterans dying each day, the active Army could not logistically provide proper military burials to all those who had fought valiantly on the shores of Omaha Beach, landed on Inchon and held their ground at Khe Sanh. Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion stepped in to provide fellow veterans a proper military burial. Despite the service of veterans like WWII Veterans and bugler Julius Falcon of Greensburg, Pa., – who turns down what he calls “the honor” to play at a fellow soldier’s funeral – the policy was one the entire military community soon regretted.

In order to correct the situation, the Pentagon and Congress came together to enact a new policy mandating rendering of military funeral honors for

eligible veterans if requested by the family. The law ensures an honor guard burial detail for eligible veterans consisting of not less than two armed forces members. One detail member will be from the deceased veteran’s parent service. At a minimum, the detail will perform a ceremony that includes

said 99TH soldiers are proud to be able to provide the service.

Dziegielewski, who also serves as an Army Reserve soldier in the personnel section of the 99TH RSC, credits the two soldier teams from each of the 99TH’s 23 major subordinate commands that are delegated many of the burial details occurring inside the 99TH RSC’s five-state command and control area.

“The soldiers are on call 24 hours a day, and sometimes we have to arrange details on short notice for the next day within two days – if we’re lucky, but we do everything possible to make sure soldiers are there,” he said.

The Pentagon calculates yearly deaths of veterans will grow, from 537,000 in 1997 to an estimated 620,000 by 2008, as the ranks of 16 million World War II era veterans – soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines whose service has prompted some to call them “The Greatest Generation” – increasingly pass away. In the 99TH’s territory, this is illustrated by the significant increase of burials in the Philadelphia area.

“In the last year, we’ve had over 500 burials in the Philadelphia area alone. We’ve put soldiers on special orders to make sure these veterans receive the burial detail they deserve,” Dziegielewski said.

Active duty and Reserve forces will continue to share funeral duties, but the policy provides reservists additional retirement points for burial detail participation.

According to a Pentagon report, the cost of sending the minimum detail of two military personnel to funerals will increase to \$207 million by 2005, but regardless of the cost, Dziegielewski said soldiers are willing to perform the duty. It’s the least we can do,” he said. ■



John Valica

folding and presenting the American flag to next of kin and playing of *Taps*. If possible, *Taps* will be played by a bugler if available, or by electronic recording if not.

The policy was officially initiated on Jan. 1, 2000, and since then, the Special Actions Branch of the 99TH Regional Support Command Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel has conducted 953 burial details. Paul Dziegielewski, casualty officer,

Families Appreciate Final Honors for Passing Veterans

By Carmen Digiacomo

These words of honor and appreciation are being repeated over and over as soldiers of the 99TH RSC render funeral honors to deceased veterans in communities all over the area of responsibility. Since January 2000, 99TH soldiers have answered the call well over 1,000 times. Nationally, World War II Veterans are dying at the rate of 30,000 per month, and most of the funeral honors performed by the 99TH soldiers are for those veterans, who were proclaimed "The Greatest Generation" by journalist Tom Brokaw.

Typical were the honors rendered to Louis Phaturos. Staff Sgt. Sandra Roberts and Sgt. Dexter Akers, of the 630TH Transportation Co., Washington, Pa., performed superbly in rendering honors to this World War II Veteran. They earned the respect and admiration of the veteran's family and reflected great credit upon this command and the U.S. Army.

Soldiers participating in this program are true ambassadors to the communities of the nation. They are looking the citizens of our nation in the eye and saying "We care." Soldiers of the command are commended for the way they have embraced the mission. Our soldiers are "heroes" honoring "heroes."

Louis Phaturos was a typical World War II Veteran. He saw combat with the 10TH Armored Division, which, like the 99TH Division, was in the Battle of the Bulge. He was wounded in action twice in April 1945, but survived the



photos courtesy of Phaturos Family

HE WAS THERE ...
Pvt. Louis Phaturos at Fort Benning, Ga., in Dec. 1942, and now.



war and was discharged in December 1945 at the rank of Staff Sergeant. In addition to the Purple Heart he was awarded a Bronze Star and the Combat Infantryman's Badge. He lived a long and prosperous life, and passed away at the age of 82 in February.

It is anticipated the demand will continue to increase. On a single day in February, there were 20 requests received by the command. To date the number of honors rendered stands at 1,228. During the current calendar year our soldiers are rendering funeral honors at a rate of four per day.

The 99TH RSC's Personnel Office is responsible for coordinating the funeral honors mission. The command is broken down into 13 major subordinate commands, and the county where the deceased

veteran is being buried determines which MSC will be responsible for the mission. The MSC is responsible for maintaining a duty roster, insuring the soldiers are trained and that the honors detail of two soldiers reports to the cemetery at the proper time. Sometimes this may require an advance visit to the cemetery by the soldiers if they are not familiar with the location. After the funeral, an after action report must be prepared and submitted to the casualty office.

When the soldiers of this command present our nation's flag to the deceased's next of kin and say, "on behalf of the President of the United States and a grateful nation ..." they are also expressing the appreciation of all the soldiers and supporters of the 99TH RSC community. ■

Taps! The Notes of a Military Passing

It all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moan of a soldier who lay mortally wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment.

When the captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The captain lit a lantern. Suddenly, he caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of a soldier. It was his son. The boy had been

studying music in the south when the war broke out. Without telling his father, he enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial despite his enemy status. His request was partially granted. The captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for the son at the funeral. That request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. Out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of his son's uniform. The wish was granted. The music was the haunting melody we now know as *Taps* that is used at all military funerals.

In case you are interested, these are the words to *Taps* :

*Day is done, Gone the sun, From the lake, From the hills,
From the sky. All is well, Safely rest. God is nigh.*

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was provided by Armed Forces Information Service.)

POLEX – *Fueled for Action*

Annual exercise provides soldiers with training and actual mission

by Tina Beller

DEVENS RESERVE FORCES TRAINING AREA, Mass. —What do a church, millions of gallons of water and petroleum, convoys of tanker trucks, 5,551 soldiers and a little danger all have in common? POLEX 2000!

Located on the old Fort Devens post, now a preserved business community, 475TH Quartermaster Group Commander, Col. William E. Crock, commands and controls the Poley mission from an abandoned church. Where one would anticipate seeing rows of rich, red and burgundy bound bibles, polished wooden pews and a communing congregation enveloped by a rainbow of stained-glass window colors, the opposite holds true. Daily thunderstorms, muddy boots and BDUs, soldiers buried in paperwork behind partitions, and a thick musty odor, sharply replace the beaming Sunday morning sun and the gay feeling of a tender moment with God as quickly as the hand of a very rugged-looking staff sergeant slams her hand on the rough surface of a field table, demanding trespassers to “Halt! Identify yourself before you enter the command post.” The deep tone of seriousness and danger unfold.

“Provide them realistic training,” said Crock. “Poley simulates a wartime mission for these Army Reserve petroleum, water and transportation units to gain technical proficiency through tactical capabilities. Each unit is separated into teams and serves at different duty sites hundreds of miles between each other.” The goal of Poley is to pipeline soldiers from 18 battalions across the nation to participate in the Army’s largest petroleum and water exercise — “Fueled for Action.” Three fuel missions comprise the Poley objectives: the line-haul, storage and water missions. Within each operation, a specific training objective is targeted as outlined by the 475TH’s Petroleum Operations Officer, Lt. Col. George J. Pecharka.

“The petroleum units work in conjunction with transportation units to receive, haul, store and distribute JP-8, or jet fuel, to their customers, while the water units will be concentrating on purifying, storing and distributing potable or drinkable water to the soldiers and the laundry and bath sites,” Pecharka said.

With 63 subordinate units under the 18 battalions, the JP-8 jet fuel mission might seem complicated with the various convoy and storage missions occurring simultaneously. But Poley is unique since it parallels a relay race where there is a handoff of the baton to another “player.” The game continues until the JP-8 or the baton reaches its final destination, or the finish line, with one exception — everybody wins.

The whole procedure seems very simple, very systematic, and in a perfect world, with perfect temperatures, weather and driving conditions nothing would fail or fall awry. But, what about fuel spills? How do they get contained and cleaned up? What about tears in the fuel bladders? Which soldier will bravely navigate through the flammable fuel in the mid-summer’s day heat to inspect the bladder for damage and loss? What about civilian and military vehicle collisions? Hopefully no one will suffer, yet who will remain calm in a chaotic four or eight lane expressway? These are just some of the dangers and challenges soldiers from the 475TH Quartermaster Group, Farrell, Pa., the 233RD Quartermaster Co., Philadelphia, Pa., and the 326TH Quartermaster Det., Newcastle, Pa., have endured during their summer rotation of Poley.

Line Haul Missions – A Different Type of Confidence Course

Remember back in basic training when soldiers climbed wooden trestles, descended ropes and leaped tall beams? The thrill of the physical rush along with the relief of making it to the next obstacle, and the danger of what happened if we failed, sailed through our bodies like an electrical current. Ironically, convoying fuel is a similar rush. Soldiers are excited to be convoying thousands of miles for the traveling aspect, yet relieved when they finally reach their destination unscathed.

To begin their annual training, soldiers from the 475TH safely convoyed five up to 5K tankers with 10 – 40 drivers to duty sites along the east coast. After the 475TH receives a phone call from a customer



Tina Beller

PIPES ARE TIGHT ...

Quarter soldiers work with the reverse osmosis water purification unit during POLEX.



Tina Beller

THE BIG SCREW ...

Engineer units were able to use equipment in actual mission during the exercise.

tion in America's East

missions to sharpen skills ... and keep fuel moving!



Tina Beller

CLEAN AND FRESH ...
A soldier from the 99TH's laundry and bath unit provided clean clothes to field troops throughout POLEX.

placing a fuel order, the line-haul missions get under way. Soldiers convoy to a vendor and pick up a specific amount of fuel. After they are issued the fuel, they convoy again to a customer like McGuire or Andrews Air Force Bases for drop-off. However purposeful convoying can appear, it can also be dangerous yet fun.

"People think driving is an easy job," said Sgt. Raynard Shellow, whose civilian occupation has him hauling 26,000 pounds of weight behind him up and down the freeways of Philadelphia.

"Convoy driving is about driver training instruction, instinct, safety and a little common sense," said Shellow, a 475TH driver training instructor. Just like a confidence course. "Civilian traffic doesn't understand the concept of convoy integrity," he said. "They're either jumping in and out of lanes or darting permanently in front of us. It's nothing new to lose sight of our own vehicles because some truck or large car is blocking our view beyond the scope of our side mirrors. Luckily, we have a couple of communication measures that we use to stay in contact with each vehicle."

Shellow explained each vehicle is equipped with a SINCGARS tactical radio with either the driver or assistant driver being familiar with its operations. Also, the lead and trail vehicles have cellular phones, so if either vehicle loses sight of the other, or if the convoy speed is accelerating too quickly, the two vehicles can still communicate through wireless connections and adjust the convoy accordingly. The cellular phone is also handy in case a truck breaks down because each convoy is equipped with a toe truck to be activated in case of an emergency.

"Sometimes driving is like a big game of dodge ball, people moving in and out," said Shellow. "It takes a lot of patience, two pairs of eyes and some confidence behind the wheel," said Shellow.

In addition to the line-haul missions to customers, other petroleum exercises like the storage missions occur at sites like Fort Dix, N.J. Here, a team of soldiers from the 233RD Quartermaster Co. from Philadelphia, Pa., tend to hazardous spills and splashes, inspect torn bladders for fuel loss and voluntarily subject themselves to the dangerous risks associated with petroleum.

Blazing Sands

Cradled in a sizzling sand pit in the training woodlands of Fort Dix, some 30 minutes from the main post, three 10,000-gallon bladders or fuel bags, similar in color and shape to a tan MRE package, are located at the fuel storage and supply point. Here, soldiers endure the hazardous and frequent lethal occupational conditions while they practice filtering the fuel clean of rubber or brass particles in addition to maintaining the integrity of their accountability procedures. Bearing the sweltering 90-degree heat and sticky humidity, these soldiers dress in BDU's, protective gloves, smocks and cloth-breathing masks not out of fun, but to protect their own safety.

"I think this is worse than diesel," admitted Sgt. Joe Scott, a four-year petroleum inventory specialist who enlisted in the 233RD because he missed his active duty job training. "There is a higher risk for danger here for many reasons. The flash point is greater and people can get burned their skin and eyes." His plastic smock and gloves, once clean and bearing the creases from being newly folded, now show smears of debris and dried fuel.

"We have to unload the fuel into this line," said Scott, pointing to a hose similar in thickness to a fireman's hose, and fastened to a fuel tanker about 15 yards away. "Between the 12 of us, we use hand signals, pumps and generators to pipeline the fuel into one of these bladders, and hopefully we can account for every drop the tankers issued us and keep it that way until it leaves here to the next set of hands," said Scott. The relay game races on.

"The fuel must be gauged every morning and compared to the

(continued on page 24)



Tina Beller

HOSES AND BLADDERS ...
Quartermaster units filled fuel bladders with diesel fuel and water for POLEX.

(continued from page 23)

amount of quantities issued to and received from the transportation units who delivered it here,” said Staff Sgt. Daniel Kubar, a petroleum inventory specialist and Pennsylvania postal serviceman. “Gauging is when a soldier takes a sample of the fuel, records the quantities and determines its usability. Additionally, when the two weeks of training are over, the same amount and quality of fuel issued to us must be returned to the vendor. This is all part of our accountability process.”

“During one night of the 20-day operation, eight gallons of fuel disappeared,” said the 475TH chief logistics non-commissioned officer, Sgt. Maj. Robert Trynovich. “The following morning when soldiers performed their regularly scheduled accountability checks they found one of the bladders had sustained a tear in the seam and a subsequent leak followed.”

After inspecting and identifying the problem, soldiers from both the 99TH and 88TH regional support commands began patching the small tear in the seam after the spill was contained. Coincidentally, Maj. Gen. Rodney D. Ruddock appeared at the site to visit 99TH soldiers serving their annual training here. “This is not entirely a misfortune,” said Ruddock, as Kubar and Scott walked him to the torn fuel bladder. “It’s good to learn from these experiences.” While the soldiers of the 233RD were quite fortunate to contain the leak and no one was injured, this unit seems confident they are prepared for any emergencies.

“Because we deal with these hazardous materials, we are required to have certain precautionary equipment on hand like our eye-wash stations, a team medic, a first aid bag, fire control and gallons of water staggered around us,” Kubar said. “One of the most enjoyable things about this unit is we never stop learning, so it really enables the more experienced soldiers to pass along what we know to the younger enlisted.”

Another unit who is known for their strong unit cohesion rather than for the danger associated with their duties is the 611TH Quartermaster Co., from Baltimore, Md.

They Make People Feel Good, Smell Good

“We are like a family, and we all stick together ... this is how we are able to work as quickly as we do,” said Spc. Latarsha Redding, a laundry and bath specialist who is using her Army Reserve educational benefits to earn her nursing degree. “Nobody wants to come out of the field after a long stinky day of work to find their dirty laundry still dirty.”

Fellow teammate, Pvt. 1ST Class Kathleen Colbert, a waitress and first semester college student, explained the 611TH’s role in the laundry mission of Poley.

“As the soldiers drop off their laundry bags, we first compare what we were given with what

the soldier writes on the laundry slip. Then we pin each piece with a numbered clip, and we combine the items from several laundry bags. We send hundreds of pieces per day through both the washer and dryer cycles, using the purified water from the ROWPU unit. We then separate the articles by the same numbered clips and return the clothes to the corresponding clean laundry bag for the soldiers to pick up,” she said.

Quite contrasting to the pungent, kerosene-like smell of the petroleum missions, the water missions, more specifically the laundry and bath, evoke a sweeter, fresher smell. The overall objective of the



“WHO GOES THERE?” ... Portions of POLEX are conducted in a tactical field environment where soldier skills are emphasized.

water missions are, “Water purification, storage, distribution and field service support,” said commanding officer Maj. Marc VanOene, of the 307TH Quartermaster Battalion, Salt Lake City, Utah. In addition to the water purification provided by the 307TH, the 611TH also provides soldiers a host of repair services for their tattered trousers and blouses. Renovations team leader, Spc. Glen Foster of Baltimore, Md., feels his job is important for several reasons.

“We help the soldiers look professional wherever these uniforms may take them in their military careers. Also, it’s more cost effective for a soldier to bring their torn pockets, patches and name tags to us because it’s expensive in the civilian world, and we do it quicker and better,” he said confidently. And to others on Foster’s team, Army Reserve renovations are more than just being cost effective or convenient – it’s an art form!

“When I hold a uniform in my hands that’s torn or in despair, I look at it like a piece of artwork, like a canvas,” said Spc. Michael Bonner who designs men’s apparel between his civilian police officer duties. “I get a plan when I look at the fabric, and it all comes together!” And no stranger to designing men’s apparel would be none other than Maj. Gen. Ruddock who visited the 611TH soldiers at the Brindle Lake site.

“When I was young boy, I always wanted tailored clothes, and my family couldn’t afford this,” admitted General Ruddock. “So, I taught myself to sew and made my own clothing. Knowing how

to sew is a very valuable asset.”

In addition to the laundry and bath and renovations missions at Brindle Lake, the 99TH RSC’s own 326TH Quartermaster Det., Newcastle, Pa., who are serving their annual training in Massachusetts, are supplying purified water through their ROWPU operations (reverse osmosis water purification) to the Poley missions in the New England states.

“ROWPU is important for several reasons,” said Sgt. David McAnallen. “We pipeline polluted water from a water site, like a pond, well or an ocean, and we channel it into our filter and purifying systems so the soldiers can use the water for medical and hygiene purposes, drinking, cooking and cleaning.”

The water missions here, Fort Dix, and Fort A.P. Hill, Va., all maintain storage, issue and distribution procedures similar to the petroleum missions. And when the water isn’t being distributed for other purposes, McAnallen said the ROWPU unit then contains the water in 3K-gallon onionskin storage bladders for safekeeping. “Once the water has completed the purification process and it’s being held in the bladders, you can dunk a cup in the water and see for yourself it tastes better than the city water.”

Overall, the soldiers who support the water missions provide these field soldiers life services.

“We make people happy,” said Colbert. “We may not be out on the convoys doing the dangerous stuff with the other soldiers, but we still get dirty and smelly just like everyone else,” she said with laughter and a smile. “We quartermaster soldiers like to call it ... looking out for the soldiers’ best interests!”

The Final Wrap-Up

While the Poley mission was scheduled for a 20-day cycle to include duty sites across the nation, mission rollup statistics show an increase in all areas. Several million gallons of JP-8 fuel were transported and delivered, an increase from 1999’s 7.9 million gallons. Additionally, the soldiers saved the government \$230,000 in hauling fees, had the government chosen to hire civilian contractors to complete the same convoy tasks an Army Reserve soldier is fully trained and qualified to do. The transportation units drove in excess of 365, 280 miles between the missions to customers and to storage sites, and lastly, the water missions exceeded purification of over one million gallons of potable water.

Although the future of Poley is unknown, the Army Reserve proudly maintains the largest petroleum and water assets in the United States military. These units are rapidly expanding their participation with Poley each year across the nation in all directions and expanding their productivity upward. As goes Poley, so goes the Army Reserve, but without these units in the Army Reserve – No Fuel, No Fight! ■

99TH Command Sergeant Major

“I believe in Kevlar”

by Kelly Luster

What do seatbelts and Kevlar have in common? Give up? They both may one day save your life. Soldiers, including active, Reserve and National Guard are finding themselves deployed to hostile areas more and more, which means Kevlar vests and helmets are being worn as often as the seatbelt in your car.

Similar to seatbelts, some people are making excuses to not wear the potentially lifesaving equipment. Some feel as though it weighs them down and hinders performance by making every movement laborious. You can't seem to sit, eat or even manage your way through the latrine comfortably.

The Kevlar helmet never fits correctly. It's either too big or too small. You turn your head a quarter and it turns an additional quarter. It's not as useful as the old “steel pot,” which could also be used to shave with, or even cook in. As for the Kevlar vest, who really wants to lug a monkey on your back all the time? The fact is, there's only one good use for Kevlar – saving your life should you fall prey to a rogue bullet or well placed enemy round. If you doubt its bullet – stopping ability, ask Command Sgt. Maj. D. Courtney Griffin, 99TH Regional Support Command.

Griffin is more than the Command Sgt. Maj. Of the 99TH RSC and a Vietnam Veteran; he is also a Lieutenant in the Chesterfield Country, Va., Police Department. As if being a police officer and a soldier isn't dangerous enough, Griffin is also a SWAT Team member; and thanks to Kevlar, he's alive to sing its praises.

Every May 22, Griffin celebrates an anniversary. According to him, there are no beautiful flowers, fine dining or even dancing. The anniversary is not of his marriage, but rather his anniversary of being alive. Twelve years ago, a Kevlar vest stopped a fatal bullet from taking his life.

Police Lt. Griffin led a Swat Team into a large abandoned house on Corling Street, Petersburg, Va. Inside the house was a determined and violent young criminal wanted for several armed robberies. In fact, earlier that



same day, he had shot two other police officers, ending the career of one and nearly killing the other.

Leading the team of three Petersburg and two Chesterfield officers into the house, Griffin stood sideways in a stairwell trying to talk the man out. Suddenly, the man fired. A 9mm round grazed the wall sending shrapnel into Griffin's lip. It didn't stop there however. The bullet's final resting place was Griffin's Kevlar vest. Fired from about 6 feet away, the slug left Griffin with a dislocated shoulder and an enormous bruise over his spleen. Although he was injured, he stayed in and after the intense gunfight, the life of the assailant was taken.

After the smoke cleared, Griffin learned that not only was his life saved due to his Kevlar vest, but the lives of two other SWAT Team members were saved as well. A Kevlar bunker shield saved the first, and the Kevlar helmet saved the other.

Although just being alive to tell the tale is the greatest reward anyone could ask for, Griffin, along with 2499 others are honored in another way – they are all now members of the IACP DuPont Kevlar Survivor's Club. The club honors police officers who survived potentially fatal or disabling injuries though the use of personal body armor. Griffin said DuPont occasionally asks him to speak to groups of police officers about the “save.” DuPont also uses taped interviews with Griffin as part of the employee training.

“In nearly 30 years of police work,” Griffin said, “This was the first time in which I had to take the life of a criminal. If there were one common thread among these deadly encounters, it would be that as my tour of duty began on that fateful day there was no forewarning. You can't guess on which days to wear your vest – you must wear it during every tour of duty, no matter how uncomfortable.”

Just as every time you get behind the steering wheel of your vehicle you should wear your seatbelt, every time you are called to duty and put on your uniform and are sent into harms way – you should also wear Kevlar protective equipment. As easily as Griffin celebrates his anniversary of life, someone could also mourn the loss of your health – or life, from not being protected. ■

SAVED HIS LIFE...

Command Sgt. Maj. D. Courtney Griffin's life was saved by Kevlar body armor. He still has the “bullet with his name on it.”

You must wear it during every tour of duty, no matter how uncomfortable.

– Command Sgt. Maj. D. Courtney Griffin

"TRANSLOTS"

Transportation and Logistics Over the Shore – the exercise that moves equipment, vehicles and soldiers forward!

by Thomas Orme

FORT STORY, Va. – Several 99TH RSC units participated in TRANSLOTS during June, using landing craft to unload one of the military's newest cargo ships and truck supplies to the front lines.

The 427TH Transportation Company from Norristown, Pa., the 946TH Transportation Company from Lewes, Del., and the 313TH Transportation Bn. from Baltimore made the long convoy to Fort Eustis, Va., and bivouacked in Hover Field for their stay. The field was fully equipped with two Mobile Kitchen Trailers staffed with Army cooks, a laundry and bath facility provided by an active-duty unit at Fort Lee, and a chaplain's tent in which religious services were provided.

Soldiers conducting force protection measures secured the field and a tactical operations center was set up as well. During the mission's "D-Day," LOTS, or logistics-over-the-shore

operations, were conducted in which military equipment, such as trucks and bulldozers, were transferred from Navy ships to Army landing craft. Then the cargo was taken ashore at Fort Story and unloaded by soldiers detailed from the motor transport battalion to serve on Port Support Activity teams on the sandy shore. The beach had previously been equipped with temporary landing facilities, including a modular trident pier.

The 464TH Transportation Company, from Fort Belvoir, Va., sent 40 soldiers to TRANSLOTS for annual training, including several landing craft.

For Spc. John Augsburg of the 464TH, TRANSLOTS began with a two-day journey from Fort Belvoir, Va., to Fort Story aboard a landing craft (medium) known as a Mike boat. A cook, Augsburg spent the exercise cross-training to become a watercraft engineer for the Mike boat.

"It's been a nice learning experience," Augsburg said. "You get to meet a lot of people – that's what I like about it. Sun, fun, MREs – What else do you need?"

Soldiers of the 680TH Transportation

Detachment, a 99TH unit based at Fort Story, provided support with their Light Amphibious Resupply Cargo vessels known as LARCs.

The LARCs moved cargo containers onto shore. The Korean-War-era watercraft was able to

skills tests. Sgt. 1ST Class Robert F. Hoban from the 223RD gave individualized training on the SINGARS or Single-channel Ground and Airborne Radio.

Before the LOTS mission could occur soldiers had to be "drown proofed" by training them in water survival techniques and precautions. This year for the first time, the annual transportation exercise is running in conjunction with Roving Sands, a joint-theater air and missile defense exercise involving more than 18,000 troops from several nations.

The linkage to Roving Sands helped make TRANSLOTS a larger joint exercise this year and involved the Navy, said Maj. Todd Rahn, a planner for the 143RD Transportation Command, the headquarters element for TRANSLOTS.

The Navy provided one of the military's largest cargo ships, the recently-built USNS Fisher. The Fisher was loaded with equipment from Fort Eustis, Va., and then offloaded by Army landing craft and other lighterage while anchored in

Chesapeake Bay offshore of Fort Story, Va.

More than 400 military vehicles and containers were offloaded from the Fisher – a new Large Medium-Speed "Roll-on-Roll-off" vessel – and also from a Fast Sealift Ship docked at Lamberts Point in Norfolk, Va.

One of the goals of the exercise was to foster active component and Reserve integration, Rahn said. More than half of the soldiers participating in the exercise were from the Army Reserve. The TRANSLOTS lead element, Rahn's 143RD Transportation Command, was an Army Reserve unit from Orlando Florida. The 32ND Transportation Group was another Reserve unit participating from Tampa, Fla. Other Reserve units from Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas, Delaware and Florida were also involved. "It has to be a team effort for these big exercises (to succeed)," Rahn said.

Many of the active soldiers were from the 7TH Transportation Group of Fort Eustis, Va. But medics from Fort Bragg, N.C., participated in the exercise at Fort Story and so did the 67TH Signal Company from Fort Gordon, Ga. ■



"LOTS OF WORK" ...

A deckhand removes a life ring from its holder aboard the ship as part of a safety check during the exercise.

roll right on shore thanks to its massive wheels. Staff Sgt. Spencer Manning was a coxswain for one of the LARCs. "Our best day was when we moved 19 pieces of cargo at night between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. Vessel traffic and the heat index slowed traffic during the daytime," Manning said.

Although the temperatures were often in the 90s, the mission suffered no heat casualties. This was attributed to command emphasis in ensuring dehydration awareness and suitable precautions, said Lt. Col. Robert Valencia, 313TH Trans. Bn. Commander. Most of the units from the 99TH were motor transportation units and did a considerable amount of driving, including the convoy down and back to their respective home bases.

Aside from setting up, conducting, and recovering from the mission, the 99TH units had some time during annual training to conduct Common Task Tests, Weapons Qualification, a Leadership Reaction Course, and other soldiering skills. Driver training helped new soldiers get their licenses for their unit. A confidence course competition was held, as well as land navigation

What's Cookin'?

99TH's Food Service Specialists from the 254TH Quartermaster Co. compete for Connelly Awards in Army Reserve Competition



photo essay by Jack Gordon

SMELLS LIKE ... VICTORY!

The 254TH Quartermaster Co., York, Pa. has been a 99TH powerhouse in cookin' up Army Chow! (From above, clockwise) Staff sergeants Brian Shaffner (right) and John Waltz await another great meal; Spec. Melissa Funk (right) serves up the day's special to hungry soldiers; Spec. Kimmie Bonner puts the "bottom" on desert – pineapple upside-down cake; Spc. Jason Golahew posts a perimeter lookout; portable immersion heaters keep everything clean as Spec. David Woodring is watched by Staff Sgt. Vincent Lopez.

BRIDGE-EX!

by Sheila Tunney

FORT CHAFFEE, Ark. – Purple-tinted clouds billow high into a massive curtain on either end of this one-mile stretch of the Arkansas River. Hanging low on the horizon as if born of the water instead of the awakening sky, the clouds silently shut out the world beyond...

Inside, 99TH Regional Support Command engineers from the 299TH Engineer Co., Fort Belvoir, Va., and the 459th Engineer Co., Bridgeport, W.Va. along with their active and National Guard counterparts, are clandestinely greeting the day building ribbon and floating bridges.

As part of “Operation Motagua Norte,” a multi-component river crossing exercise, the 299TH and 459th are giving new credence to the Army’s claim, *We do more by 9 a.m. than most people do all day.*

With this crew, they’ve done more by *dawn* than most people do all day! Their workday actually began around 3 a.m., when the nearly 800 troops involved moved to an equipment staging area approximately one-half mile from the river sites. From here and through the exercise’s traffic control point, nearly a hundred vehicles, including common bridge transports (CBT) (M977 series HEMTT’s) tooled down dusty dirt roads to three bridge sites.

Once at the river’s edge, the CBTs unload the bridge sections into the water where platoons of engineers seemed to effortlessly connect these massive “parts” that either will span the river or become a floating barge.

Welcome to the wonderful world of Army bridges, or BRIDGE-X as it is commonly called, where a 200-foot ribbon bridge or five-bay barge provides a gateway for combat troops and equipment to traverse water obstacles. While the building of the bridges may seem to flash by in an instant, exercise commander, Col. William Gross, 493RD Engineer Group of Texas, will tell you unequivocally the coordination for these exercises is long and drawn out.

Besides the months of unit and individual training and equipment preparation, long lists of other agencies have integral parts in making the exercise work.

“Our headquarters coordinated with multiple government agencies like the Coast Guard, the

Corps of Engineers, Fort Chaffee officials and the local police,” said Gross. “It’s the units that benefit from all this pre-exercise coordination and effort.”

The Army Reserve units involved are drawn from four different regional support commands, so that added an extra element of coordination according to Gross.

“We’ve brought the units all to one place which gives them an opportunity to work with a higher headquarters,” Gross said. “They’re also getting the opportunity to work with active component and National Guard units, which gives our Reserve units a chance to trade knowledge in bridging operations.”

Gross said Reserve engineer units benefit greatly by working side-by-side with active engineers who train on the water on a daily basis. In return, active troops gain critical skills in equipment maintenance which Army Reserve troops practice monthly.

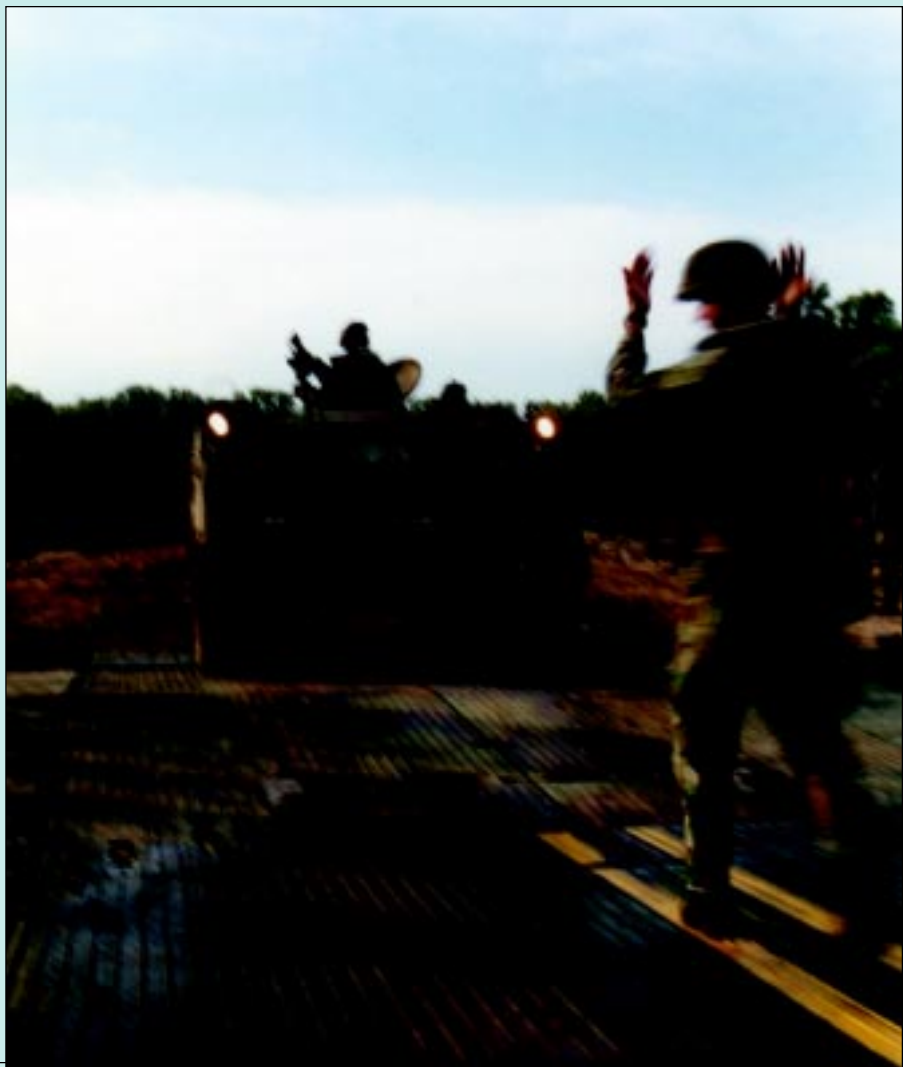
“The active troops from Fort Polk, La., don’t do as much maintenance as we do because they have a maintenance activity on their post,” said Gross. “But what’s also important is the units are operating in an environment approximating what would happen in combat.”

Preparations to replicate this real world scenario include securing and holding the bridgeheads and

doing an in-depth analysis of the physical site according to Capt. Norman Nelson, commander, 299TH Engineer Co.

This task was made more realistic with the introduction of a military police unit into the scenario that not only managed traffic control, but acted as the exercise’s opposing forces. Once secured, analysis of the river site is possible.

“The analysis includes tasks such as gauging the river’s depth, width, water velocity and the make-up of the banks,” said Nelson. The measurements are crucial in determining how much and what type of equipment is needed for the bridging operations. “It’s been six years since we’ve done a bridge exercise, and this is one of the first opportunities we’ve had to train in a combat environment since



Steve Harmon

COME ON ABOARD! ...

A soldier uses hand signals to bring a tracked vehicle aboard the ribbon bridge.



Steve Harmon

AIR, LAND, WATER ...

All forms of transportation were used in Bridge-Ex.

we got new equipment. Last year, we were deployed to Guatemala for a humanitarian mission," Nelson said.

The new equipment arrived during 1998 to both the 299TH and the 459TH who now have the distinction of being the first two Army units to be equipped with the CBTs. They have the capability to transport and build both heavy dry support bridges and improved ribbon bridges. This year's annual training also afforded them the opportunity to train on other newly acquired equipment.

It s been six years since we ve done a bridge exercise, and this is one of the first opportunities we ve had to train in a combat environment since we got new equipment.

– Capt. Norman Nelson

"Since we've arrived here, we've had Lanes training in which the unit had an outstanding opportunity to focus on their ARTEP standards for training. We did well," said Nelson. "We also exercised some new equipment like our crane and the Hyex scoop loader. Both of these support the bridging mission in clearing and loading."

When these tasks are accomplished, the troops can move on to constructing the bridges. Metal bays that fit together end-to-end are the main components of the Army bridges. They are delivered to the river

sites folded in half by air, sling-loaded or overland by CBT.

"Basically, the bays from the transports are dropped into the water at the shore, and it's just physics that opens them. Once it hits the water, it just springs open," said Sgt. Sam Harvey, a 299TH bridge erection boat operator.

"The ones from the choppers are dropped into the water folded, but a hook is used to open them. Either way, once they're in the water, we come along in these boats and push the bay to wherever it's needed," Harvey said.

"We've been doing this all week," said Harvey. "Now we're getting pretty good at it. When we started it took an hour and 47 minutes to put together a five-float barge, now we're down to 21 minutes for a six-float."

His job at present is to hold in place one of those "five-floats" which is being converted to a ribbon bridge. Harvey, along with four other boat operators, is preventing the barge from moving with the thrust of his boat's engine as new bays are added. To coordinate this, the operators take direction from the raft commander who is standing atop an armored

BRIDGING THE RIVER ...

Sections of ribbon bridge unfold as the 99TH's water-borne engineers begin the crossing.

personnel carrier on the barge.

"That's all I do. I look at him. I only look at his port arm," Harvey said. When the raft commander suddenly whips his arm down to his side, Harvey responds in kind, pulling back with the same intensity on his throttle.

These coordinated movements keep the already-connected bays in place while more bays are added.

"We're converting it now to a full closure. We build it at a 45-degree angle from the shore on both sides because it's hard to hold the bays against the current. There's less force on it. Then we bring them together in the middle," Harvey said.

From above, the two sides of the growing bridge might look like pinball flippers on either shore. These will be eventually swung towards each other, meet in the middle of the waterway, and span the river.

And indeed when the bridge does come together, a sense of relief is evident. The engineers of the unit working opposite the 299TH happen to be one of the active units participating in the exercise. The teams from both sides shake hands and share their accomplishment — a common mission.

The projects here are extensive, not only in the quantity of equipment and specialized training for soldiers, but in the time spent planning and coordinating. The time has evidently has paid off for the 99TH RSC's two bridge companies who — by 9 a.m. have done more than most people do *all week!* ■

Military Police Hit the G

220TH MP Brigade
diversifies training
at Fort Drum, NY

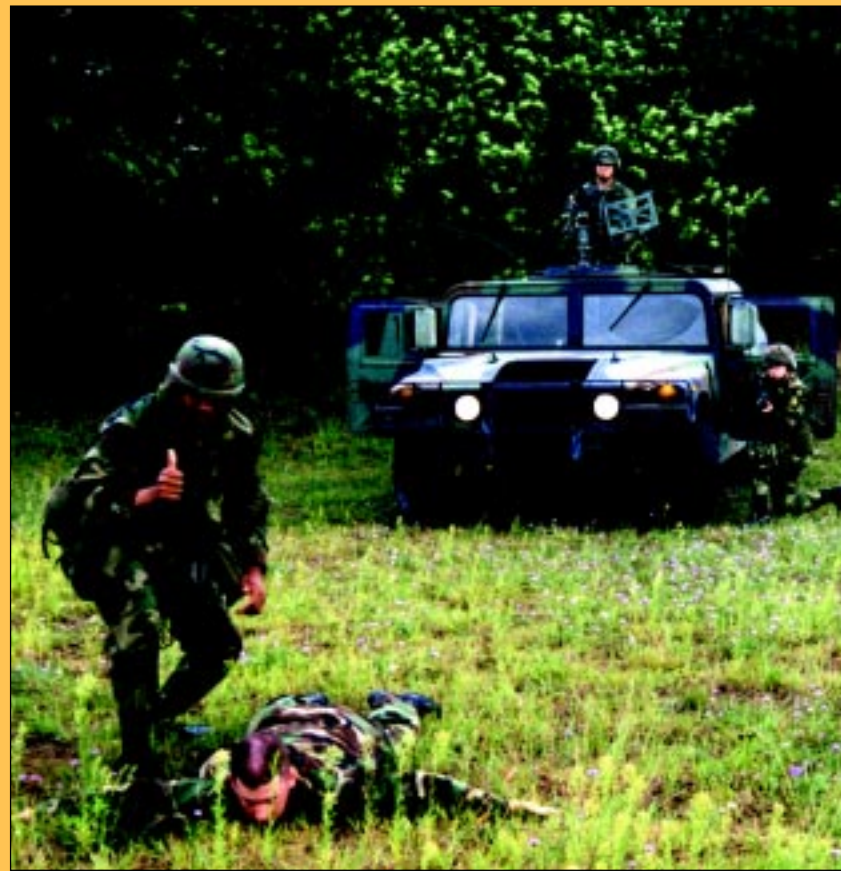
photo essay by Jack Gordon



ROUNDS ARE FLYIN' ...
Soldiers serving units of the 220TH MP Bde. used HUMVEE-mounted MK-19 Automatic Grenade Launchers.



OUT OF "DODGE!" ...
The unit's temporary camp is "jumping" to another location – part of the field logistics challenge.



ENEMY PRISONER CAPTURED ...
A heavily armed squad of MPs led by Sgt. 1ST Class Andre Henderson prepares to search a "captured" soldier.

round *Running!*



DON'T MOVE AN INCH!" ...
Staring down the business end of an MK-19 is *not* the place to be!



ARMED AND READY ...
Sgt. 1ST Class Andre Henderson awaits further orders for his team of MPs.



"METAL" ON TARGET! ...
A 220TH MP brigade soldier checks the accuracy of barrages of MK-19 grenades at the range.

Troops prepare for warfare and against new, non-tr

by Jack Gordon

FORT DRUM, NY— In Operation Desert Storm, the Army engaged in combat operations stretching more miles than the eye could see — as what had become, perhaps one of the largest land maneuver forces ever assembled, swung a devastating— left hook that knocked out what remained of Saddam Hussein's famed Republican Guard. Those Iraqi soldiers who either remained in place or were cutoff from retreat encountered a fierce armada of American armor with guns blazing as it crossed the sea of sand and they died there.

But terrain always dictates strategy, and presents the challenge to those soldiers actually doing the frontline fighting.

Jungle, mountain and desert operations are all challenging, but most combat veterans agree there is little terrain warfare that compares to the threats and dangers inherent to city fighting — building-by-building, street-by-street — until the city is secure. Military police realize they may one day face such a challenge, and here they're training for it.

Whether the next place is Iraq or Iran — or anywhere really — we're going to be in the cities, said Staff Sgt. Jeff Walton, 304th Military Police Co., Bluefield, W. Va. Walton is serving as a range safety here at the close combat course.

The course is being conducted at a MOUT (Military Operations in Urban Terrain) site — a simulated— city environment with buildings on either side of a street, and vehicles in the road.

The enemy here rise in the form of pop-up targets that test soldiers' ability to react to surprise and operate as a team while moving, under fire, through city streets.

Maj. Robert Staby, commander, 336th MP Bn., Pittsburgh, explained the learning curve of the training.

There are five phases, Staby said. First, we do a talk-through — then a walk-through, followed by a dry run. After that, we use blank rounds before going hot to live fire. Safety — as in any live fire exercise — is stressed.

At each step, the soldiers get a fresh orientation and safety briefing, Staby said. This training is very restrictive — very controlled. Staby characterized the method employed on the course as a three-man maneuver team using a SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon) gunner in the overwatch position while the two riflemen advanced under cover fire.

Walton urged the soldier teams to move as slowly as necessary through the first phases, and pick up the tempo as they entered the dry run. When the teams entered phase five — actual squad maneuver with live fire — it's executed at combat speed.

They move as a team and engage targets, Walton said. This is high speed for everyone.

It's critical to have a balance between both urban and traditional terrain operations, said Staby. As MPs, we could be called upon to perform our missions in either environment.

With most of the organic units of the 220th Military Police Brigade training here, units are being tested in many ways. So are soldiers. A favored method this year seems to be offering opportunity in the leadership arena, and almost everyone is getting a chance.

They (exercise controllers) killed the platoon sergeant and platoon leader, said Staff Sgt. Shawn Russo. I had to step all the way up to platoon leader. It wasn't what I'd call pleasurable, but I learned a lot about what can happen with chain of command casualties, and what can happen in urban surroundings.

Soldiers performed the coordinated combat tactics of providing cover fire, and squad fire and maneuver operations throughout the day at the site, whose pop-up enemy targets and vehicle barricades took a few hundred more well directed M16 rounds.

It's rough, said Spec. Shawn Arlet, 307th MP Co., New Kensington, Pa. We have to crawl through windows, and really watch every corner, and what might be around it. It's pretty intense training.

This is the best — it mimics actual combat in city operations, said Walton. ■

are in urban sites – additional enemies

Terror Squad Adds Reality to Training

by Jack Gordon

FORT DRUM, NY —As our global societies become more complex, so do our common struggles. Most wars, and the battles within them, bleed over into the civilian sector, and lines between enemies become cloudy. Part of the training here addresses these situations, and is testing soldiers for what might easily confront them some time, some place somewhere.

Our job is to test the training levels of the soldiers — how they respond to different situations, said Sgt. Harry Meyers, 352nd Military Police Co., Rockville, Md. We've posed as enemy special forces, civilians, public officials — all kinds of roles. Meyers is used to dealing with varied publics — he's a W. Va. state policeman in his civilian occupation. Here he's the OPFOR (Opposing Force).

Maj. Robert Staby, commander, 336th MP

Bn., Pittsburgh, said the OPFOR is especially creative this year, and has injected terror into the training.

The OPFOR is using a terror force to conduct PSYOPS (psychological operations), Staby said. They captured and killed soldiers, then used Polaroid photographs as leaflets and left them around to instill fear in the troops, telling them they will meet with similar destinies — that sort of thing. The psychological edge can offer great advantages to those who employ it properly, and although this is training — it is reality training, and leadership training.

Given certain situations, said Spec. Robert Marin, 336th MP Bn., soldiers will feel different ways about what to do to achieve a goal. That's where the structure comes in.

This kind of thing tests leadership and levels of communication, said Meyers. It also tests the use of force, which are things our MPs serving in Bosnia and Kosovo



TRAINING IN TERRORISM ...
Maj. Robert Staby and Command Sgt. Maj. Edward Stotts review the OPFOR terror campaign's visual elements.

encounter.

They're (OPFOR) doing an excellent job, Staby said. It really broadens the training.

We're MPs, Meyers said. We can't just train to kill the enemy in combat — we must be able to interface with the civilian population of the host nation, so human communication is important. ■



ROUNDING THE CORNER ...

A soldier makes a move around a "hot" corner during squad drills at the Close Combat Course live fire range.





Paintball Puts “Sting” in Combat Field Training for Engineers

OUCH!

by Anthony Todd Carlisle

LEEPER, Pa. – “The paintball aspect is a plus,” said Sgt. 1ST Class Stuart McNeill, Active Guard Reserve operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge for Co. A, 458TH Engineer Bn., Brookville, Pa. “Training is retention.” The soldiers learn to move faster and with more caution when dealing with the threat of a paintball finding its mark on an unsuspecting soldier.

Army Reserve soldiers and potential recruits from the 458TH had the opportunity to get their hands dirty by doing a little “painting” as part of a training exercise at the Briar Hill Paintball Field here.

The paintball training, which included a stay in a tent the chilly night before, is part of an exercise and public relations effort to give the soldiers and recruits a more realistic taste of what combat might be like.

Aside from the simulated combat training, other soldiers have the chance to train using the unit’s heavier equipment such as the front-end loaders and backhoes. According to McNeill and Briar Hill Paintball co-owner Rod Cyphert, the situation is positive for the military.

The focus for many of the soldiers is the paintball training and the lessons learned from the exercise. The soldiers get a chance to “get tactical” as they prepare for an ambush from the well-trained and motivated “enemy” forces employed by Briar Hill. They are also mindful of the sharp sting of pain the marble-sized paintballs will cause if they fail to remember their training and task. The paintball also gives the soldiers a pinpoint location as to where they have been hit and an idea of what they might have done wrong. The paintball training is not only a great tool to condition soldiers, but is also a fun activity

the soldiers enjoy as a break from their normal drills.

The paintballs are considered by some as more realistic than the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES), in which a laser is used to activate target sensors attached to the soldier’s load bearing equipment (LBE) and helmet. When a soldier is hit, a high-pitched beeping sound goes off. The MILES equipment at times has proven to be inaccurate.

However, with



Kelly Luster

TOUCH OF REALISM ...

Knowing you might actually be “shot” intensifies the training.

the paintball game, people are shot with the paintballs, which are gelatin capsules filled with vegetable oil, dish detergent and food coloring. The paintballs, which are biodegradable and environmentally friendly, leave a bright



Kelly Luster

ATTACK OR RETREAT? ...

Soldier runs through the rush during the exercise.

washable stain on the person.

Spc. Gabe Wildauer, combat engineer, said the combat simulations are not only realistic, but are also fun.

Paintball is also a good recruiting tool. Three potential recruits were here, enjoying the weekend training with the soldiers and getting a taste of military life. According to Ben Aukeny, a junior at Brookville High School, the experience has been great and he is seriously thinking about joining the Army. “I like the discipline and the idea of getting in shape.”

Chris Retiel, a senior at Oil City High School who plans to attend Pennsylvania State University to study engineering, recently joined the unit under the Army Reserve Delayed Entry Program and is attending his first drill. “I’m having a lot of fun,” Retiel said. He enlisted as a means to get extra money for college but wasn’t expecting to be “shooting stuff” so soon.

Robert Heeler, who began to consider joining the Army Reserve last year, also wants money for college, along with the experience and travel offered by Reserve duty. For Heeler, the teamwork he sees in the 458TH is what has impressed him the most over the weekend.

Company Commander 1ST Lt. Brian Kessinger, said the training not only helps prepare his troops to move in the field and gives his NCOs a chance to lead troops, but it helps him to evaluate the unit’s soldiers. “This gets people motivated to learn and have fun,” he said. “Twelve-Bravos have got to learn in the field.”

Kessinger said the paintball training reinforces the fundamentals of tactical individual movement, using cover and concealment.

There are some limitations with the training that most of the soldiers choose to ignore. The paintball guns are not as accurate as a rifle, nor do they have the same weight. The range of these weapons is considerably less with the paintball only able to travel a few hundred feet.

These problems are minor to the soldiers who are training here. The soldiers are willing to take the good with the bad, realizing the benefits of the training outweigh the limitations. The lessons from the small sting of a paintball here may save a soldier from entering the sights of a skilled enemy sniper on some distant battlefield.

Training is retention, but for these soldiers, it’s a good time as well. ■

Absolutely Japan

by Jack Gordon

Have you ever heard of a haiku? Probably not, but since you're now in Japan, you should know that haiku is a form of poetry – a form of poetry special to Japan. Haiku is highly stylized and refined in its structure, usually consisting of 17 syllables arranged in three lines. The first line containing five syllables; the second, seven; and the third, five.

Haiku may be considered as a personal inspiration or observation or perception of the poet that reflects insight into nature, or the changing and delicate nature of human life. It is also traditional for the verse to contain some reference to the four seasons of Japan, and the special nature of each season through the use of a flower, an animal, a custom or an event to evoke a certain feeling or understanding which may or may not be symbolic.

Japan's greatest haiku poet was Matsuo Manefusa, whose literary pseudonym was Matsuo Basho. It was Basho who took the 17-syllable form and further enriched it with descriptive simplicity and contrast by dispensing with the rigid line structure. The Japanese word often used to describe Basho's poetry is "sabi," the love of the old, faded, and unobtrusive. He is considered the father and greatest exponent of haiku in its present form.

In 1679 Basho wrote his first haiku:

*On a withered branch
A crow has alighted:
Nightfall in autumn.*

Here at camp during Keen Sword, I have written what I feel might be an appropriate haiku:

*As I watch the stars
In the evening sky I know
I have made friends here.*

But don't make the mistake some did about Basho, thinking his sensitive poetry made him anything less than a "man" – Basho was a samurai for a feudal lord, and yet serves as the perfect example of the poet-warrior. ■

(Editor's Note: This article appeared in the Double-Edge, the field newspaper for the army exercise in Japan. The Double-Edge was awarded First Place in the 2000 U.S. Army Keith L. Ware Journalism Awards Program. The 354th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment deployed to Japan in Nov., 2000.)

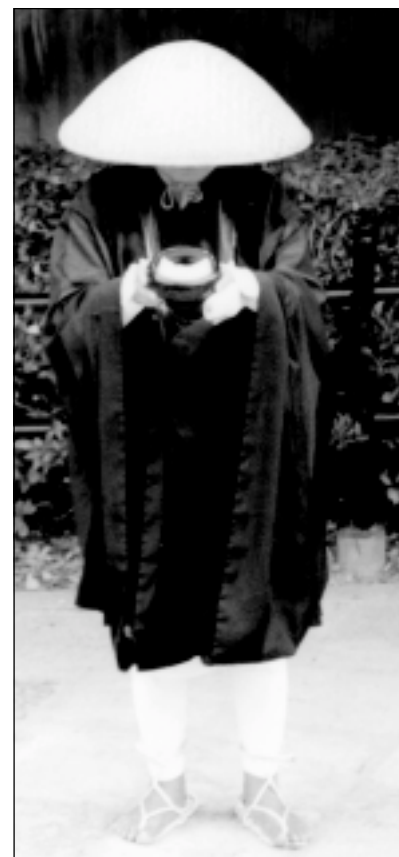
IT'S HOLY WATER ...

Young schoolgirls draw water from a holy site in a Kyoto temple, but seem more amused by "gajin" visitors.



THE GREAT BUDDHA ...

A large, bronze Buddha sits in eternal peace at a shrine in Kyoto, home to several of Japan's oldest temples.



A HOLY MAN ...

A monk stands silent and stoic with his bowl to accept donations, outside the Kiyomizu-dera Temple.





A SINGULAR BEAUTY ...
A towering temple rises
from the lush gardens at
a Kyoto temple site.

JAPANESE EXPERIENCE inspires editor to experiment in Oriental poetry

Yellow moon glowing
Against a black sky
A cobalt cloud drifts by.

Before the sunrise
A whisper of light
Through the pines.

Leaf embraced in arms
Of the limb ... daughter
And mother in autumn.

Once again my service in our Army has extended me the opportunity of a lifetime – since I have never had the experience of writing a column aptly titled “Absolutely Japan” for a newspaper read by both American and Japanese soldiers during Keen Sword 2001, an annual exercise conducted in a region known as the Japanese Alps, in the Honshu prefecture.

I have watched each soldier gain something new and different during this training mission, from the hard rock band and rap groups within the 1ST Bn., 27TH Infantry Regiment, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, to the absolute calm of a Japanese dawn. Others have traded martial arts techniques with soldiers who are all skilled in various forms of ancient fighting techniques. Me? I’m the wandering poet, and never would have guessed that one day, my wanderings would lead me here ... to Japan, and to writing Haiku. ■

– Jack Gordon

THE LITTLE GEISHA ...

A small child traditionally dresses like her ancient ancestors during Schichi-go-sau (7.5.3) on Nov. 15.

The Army Beret — The pride,

by Jack Gordon

HQ, 99TH Regional Support Command, Oakdale, Pa. — Yikes! The time will soon be arriving (or will it?) when soldiers may be sporting the headgear formerly reserved only for those who were tough enough to have “earned it,” as the saying goes — usually the saying said before the first fist smashes someone’s nose in a dimly lit bar outside Fort Benning or Fort Bragg.

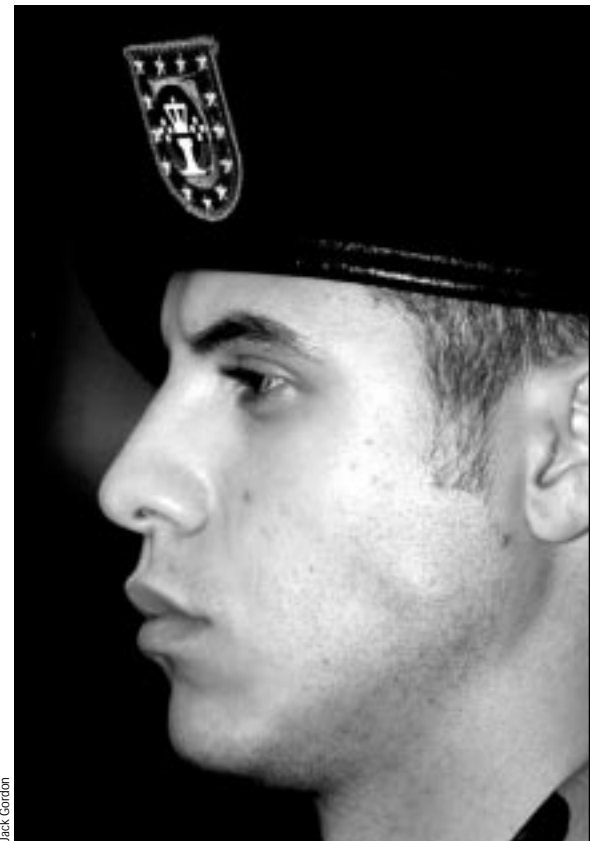
OK! Enough already! An idea is an idea ... is an *idea*! Nothing more. While I understand the pride a soldier has from earning a living by fearlessly leaping from “perfectly good airplanes,” I also understand that, as an Army — we’ll get *beyond* the bickering over who will wear what hat, and what they have to do to get it, aside from tossing down twenty bucks at the closest military clothing and sales store.

And just so it’s crystal clear, I know those who have come before me — wearing green, black and brown (Yes ... *brown*) berets, earned their keep. I know they sought to be the very best they could be — so to speak — and they had great personal pride in their achievements. Me too. I’m with them. But it’s a new day ... now.

I know those who have come before me — wearing green, black and brown (Yes ... brown) berets, earned their keep. I know they sought to be the very best they could be — so to speak — and they had great personal pride in their achievements.

The decision for the Army to trade its BDU soft caps for what the French and avant-garde artists are known worldwide for wearing shouldn’t come as such a big surprise. Like the mass marketing of naturally flavored spring water, the move has been under consideration for at least a dozen years. I’ve heard about it no less than five times in the past decade.

When Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki incorporated the beret transformation into a much greater one — that of forming a ready-to-respond,



Jack Gordon



THE BLACK BERET “Symbol of Transformation”

FAST FACTS

- The black beret emphasizes the Army’s history and tradition of excellence. The blue flash represents the Continental Army and the 13 stars signify America’s 13 colonies.
- Beginning as early as 1924, the British Army began wearing black berets for a few very simple reasons. For one thing, the color hid the grease spots tankers often left on the hats when putting them on and taking them off as they worked on their vehicles. Also, the beret allowed tank crewman to comfortably wear radio headsets and push their faces against the tank’s telescopic sights.
- Although historians say a few Ranger units unofficially wore black berets during the 1950s and again during the Vietnam War, the Center of Military History can find no photos or documentation indicating World War II Rangers were ever authorized to wear berets of any color.
- The headgear did not become an official part of the Ranger uniform for another 25 years. In 1975, the Army authorized two newly formed ranger battalions to wear black berets — one year after both armor and cavalry units around the Army began wearing black berets.
- Many soldiers say, “Oh yeah,” when they are reminded that armor and cavalry units throughout the Army were authorized black berets from 1973-1979. Opposing Force units at the National Training Center, Joint readiness Training center and Combat Maneuver Training Center have worn black berets for years. ■

the history, and well ... the mess

rapid-reaction Army lighter and faster than the one that took six months to properly mobilize, deploy, and strategically emplace in Saudi Arabia before then President George Bush dropped the sword that altered the operational action plan of Desert Shield to Desert Storm.

Shinseki sees tomorrow's Army as "... agile, deployable and lethal ...". The black beret will become symbolic of that transformation and evolution, and certainly of that global mission.

But ... even "the best laid plans of men ..." may go awry — enter the Chinese. Although the Army wants its troops to wear 'em, manufacturing shortfalls and diplomatic trouble with China now have soldiers scrambling to find one. Congress even blackballed the U.S. Armed Forces hats made by what the *Washington Times* called "... a future military adversary..." There were also questions from political voices concerning the entire plan's strategy ... or reason, aside from angering the

traditions of the Army's past and present elite forces.

More than a half million black berets were to be made by a British firm that subcontracted the order to a factory in China. Other subcontracts had the black beanies being made in Romania, South Africa and India. Enter the Berry Amendment, a 60-year-old document that specifically states American military uniforms must be made in America — with American components — by Americans, excepting an emergency. Oops.

As the Defense Logistics Agency began the recall of all the hats, they cited substandard quality levels as the overriding issue. The entire deal called for 4.8 million berets contracted through seven separate companies, at a whopping price tag of \$29.6! Wow! I say again ... "Wow!" I spell ... Whiskey — Oscar — Whiskey! Over."

The phasing is set to begin on June 14"— the Army's birthday, as yet another symbolic gesture aimed at instilling the spirit of the past in today's

soldier. All elements of America's Army are scheduled to receive the berets being manufactured by companies deemed to be "OK" by DLA, simultaneously and without favored fielding to the active, Guard or Reserve forces. All units serving the triad will get the berets equally and as they become available. One of the goals is to avoid mixed headgear in units, which now seems almost unavoidable.

And there's little doubt that today's ... or tomorrow's "generation-after-next" soldiers will be marching to the "Army of One" drumbeat, if recruiters can get their signatures scrawled across the dotted line. Will the new slogan pounding the chest of individuality help? Maybe. Will the black beret? Maybe. Will it make us more willing warriors, or ready to take down an enemy? Maybe.

Everyone has their own read on the most controversial hat since ... well, maybe ... ever. But get ready — The berets are coming! ■



Illustration by Steve Opet and Jack Gordon

Donning beret brings mixed emotions to former 82ND Airborne combat veteran

by Anthony Todd Carlisle

OAKDALE, Pa. — Master Sgt. Richard Castelveter, a former paratrooper with the 82ND Airborne Division, said donning a beret was like putting on Superman's cape.

"You feel invincible. You feel like you're ready to take on any aggressor at any time," Castelveter said. "You feel proud!"

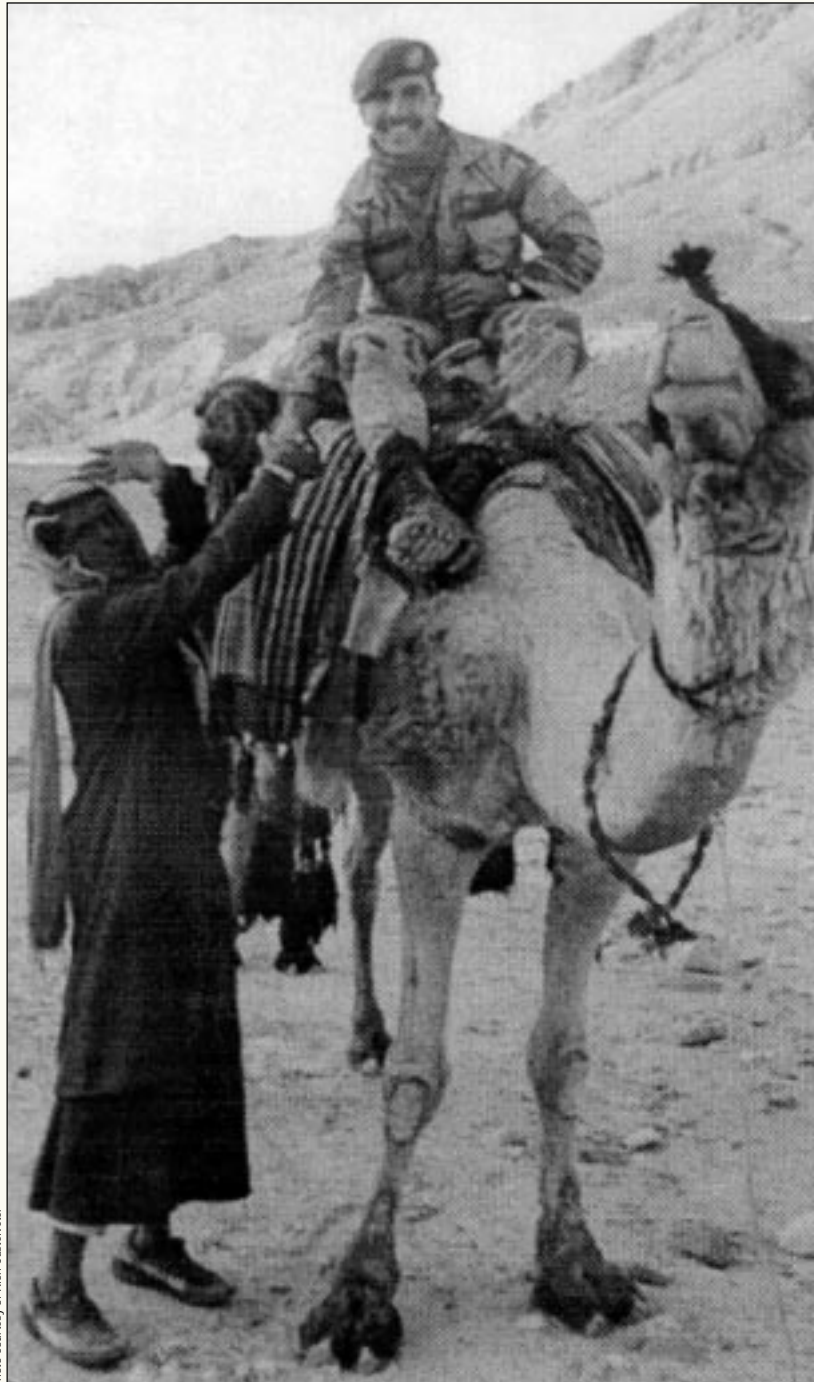
Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinewski will soon pass that feeling of pride and invincibility on to the 474,000 men and women serving in the Army. Shinewski announced in October that all soldiers would begin wearing the black beret on June 14, the Army's first birthday of the new millennium. The beret is also being seen as a symbol of the Army's transformation to a lighter, more responsive and deployable force.

However, some soldiers who have served in units where the beret is authorized and recognized to distinguish a special unit in the Army have seen this as an affront. The beret historically has been reserved for those elite units like the 82ND Airborne, Army Rangers and Special Forces. The beret distinguishes these soldiers from other troops. In March, more than 200 U.S. Army Rangers gathered at the Lincoln Memorial to protest the plan to issue the black berets.

Castelveter, who has served in the Army Reserve public affairs career field since 1986 and is now Chief of Public Affairs here, understands the frustration. He said he even feels a little of it himself.

"To me personally, it's a sort of slap in the face to any soldier who sweated and went through hell to have the honor to wear that beret," Castelveter said. "It's more than just a beret. It's what's behind the beret."

For Castelveter, the beret means honor, pride and respect. It



WAY UP TOP! ...

Then Sgt. (Now Master Sgt.) Rich Castelveter sits high atop a Bedouin tribesman's camel near the Gulf of Aqaba on the Sinai Peninsula, in 1982, as part of the United Nations' Multi-National Force. Castelveter served as an infantry soldier with the 82ND in Grenada.

means being the best, which is why he enlisted in the Army and joined the 82ND Airborne in 1982.

"I was always a team player in high school," Castelveter said. "I played all three sports. I'm a winner. I like to win. I wanted to go to a winning team."

Castelveter, who wears the "All American" patch on his right shoulder, earned the Combat Infantryman's Badge in Grenada. Beside the combat he experienced during Operation Just Cause, his service in the 82ND took him to other places like Germany, the Middle East and Central America. Castelveter said his service in Grenada and with the coalition peacekeeping force was intense, and it helped forge a bond with fellow paratroopers.

"This was an environment of life and death," Castelveter said. "It didn't matter if you were black, white, Puerto Rican, Asian — there was no ethnic background. We were all brothers — all paratroopers."

Castelveter said he understands what the Army is attempting to achieve when all soldiers will begin wearing the beret June 14, the Army's 226TH birthday. He sees the move as both a recruiting tool and a way to instill more pride in the Army.

"They're looking 10 years down the road," said Castelveter. "When all of this blows over, the beret will instill a different level of pride in everyone. It's going to make soldiers want to be the best. For now though, there's going to be a lot of growing pains."

Castelveter plans to deal with the new beret policy like any "strack" paratrooper would.

"I don't endorse it, but I'm here to serve, and to take orders from my chain of command," he said. "I'll drive on with an 'Airborne! All the Way!'" ■

photo courtesy of Rich Castelveter

The Army, and especially the 99TH ... is looking for a few, good ... officer candidates!

by Stephanie Thum

Under-staffed.

That is the reality these days among the leadership ranks of the United States Army Reserve. With just a fraction of the needed junior officers coming into the USAR from the nation's Army ROTC programs, several hundred positions remain vacant in most job areas in units throughout the United States.

Direct officer commissioning has become one solution to the USAR's dilemma. In the last two years, the personnel office at the 99TH RSC has coordinated approximately 100 such officer commissions, making their office among the most successful direct commissioning outlets in the USAR in recent years.

"We know that we can be a part of the solution," says Col. Rich Lawson, personnel management officer at the 99th. "Many soldiers and civilians alike may be eligible for a direct commission and not realize the opportunity is there."

Lawson said that opportunities abound for lawyers, doctors and chaplains; however, many opportunities exist outside the legal, medical and religious professions, as well.

What are the basic qualifications?

To apply for a direct commission, an applicant must have earned a general technical score of 110 or greater on the ASVAB. The most qualified applicants will hold a four-year college degree and be younger than age 32. Application guidelines are flexible.

The process

First, an applicant must locate an opening on the unit level. The opening may be in his or her current unit, or in another unit. "Our office can help soldiers locate openings," said Lawson.

After locating an open position, applicants then assemble a packet of information, based on their personnel records. A few of the packet's elements include

- A signed application,
- Copies of college transcripts,
- Letters of recommendation,
- Copy of the applicant's birth certificate, and
- DA photograph.

Once the packet is complete, the applicant sends the material through their chain of command to the personnel office of their RSC for a review by the RSC's personnel staff. The RSC staff then arranges the next step of the process

— the in-person field interview board.

The field interview board consists of three voting members—one officer from the branch of the USAR where the applicant wishes to be appointed, and two additional officers.

"The purpose of the field interview is to assess the applicant's potential for increased leadership responsibility," said Lawson. "Like a civilian job interview, this is a formal meeting where the applicant's appearance and composure are important."

After the in-person field interview, the board's comments, along with the applicant's original packet, are passed to the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command (PERSCOM) in St. Louis, MO where a final decision on the applicant's direct commission takes place.

During those meetings, board members either approve or disapprove each soldier's application. Applicants learn their results via their RSC representative followed by a mailed letter from PERSCOM.

What are the Pros and Cons?

On the upside, officers earn increased pay, face new responsibilities, and encounter new challenges. Some applicants say better perks, added personal satisfaction, and new challenges are important benefits. On the other hand, enlisted soldiers give up certain fringe benefits such as student loan repayment and

sign-on bonuses.

Newly commissioned officers must complete their branch's Officer Basic Course (OBC), a 12-20 week commitment, within three years. To be promoted to higher ranks, the soldier should complete OBC within two years. Applicants commissioned without a four-year college degree should complete the degree within a few years of appointment, or risk being discharged.

Is it for you?

Lawson and his staff agree that a direct commission is not for everyone. "If you enjoy your work as a hands-on soldier, then maybe a direct commission isn't for you," said Capt. Andy Thum, personnel actions officer. "Officers trade the hands-on duties for supervisory and managerial tasks. Some people don't like supervisory jobs. So really think about what you want to get out of your military career before applying for a direct commission."

For information

Begin by speaking with your unit administrator, S-1 or commander. If needed, your UA or S-1 may contact the personnel office at the 99TH RSC for forms and instructions. ■



TOO HOT TO HA

by Tina Beller

WEST POINT MILITARY ACADEMY, New York —People often associate fire with the orange glow flickering from a lit candle or the cozy, romantic warmth of a wood-burning fireplace. Seldom do we think of the impact fire has upon nature. However, this past August at the Crow's Nest, a 400-600 acre woodland here, roared like a gigantic bonfire as one simple brush fire, encouraged by the winds of Mother nature and her 98-degree arid heat quickly multiplied into 17 separately scorching fires. Tragedy to the surrounding wildlife, this event marked a call to duty for five 99TH soldiers.

"These were challenging fires to fight," said team leader Sgt. 1ST Class Charles Crego, a 20-year 369TH veteran. "The thickness of the leaves growing on the trees acted like a shield protecting whatever lived below. Aviation support was dropping 500 gallons of water overhead on each air trip, but the fires kept burning steadily because the water couldn't penetrate the trees."

Sgt. Robert Bastian, a New Jersey postal worker and civilian volunteer firefighter, explained another obstacle, "Every year a new layer of peat moss is added to the forest floor here, so the fires are burning underneath them. We couldn't detect and stop them as easily as we did in other areas where we could clearly see them burning."

In their effort to halt numerous obstacles plaguing the Crow's Nest, forest ranger evaluated the direction the fire was traveling, and began a "backburn."

"A second fire is ignited to collide head on with the first fire," said Bastian. "Eventually, they meet and diffuse because they run out of fuel to breathe. Unfortunately, the sporadic rains weren't heavy enough to cool the flames, yet the rain saturated the vegetation enough leaving it unable to be burned."

For seven days, these soldiers worked side by side with firefighters from West Point and Fort Dix, local civilian units, employees from both the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the New York Department of Transportation, state forest rangers police, and volunteers from a regional correctional facility to protect this area from being completely destroyed.

More obstacles still existed – steep terrain, a nearby gas line that needed additional protection, and possibly unexploded ordnance, according to a news

article published by the West Point newspaper. Additionally, as the team would rake the soil before they doused it with a water-foam combination, another fire became visible by the sounds of crackling tree limbs or the hiss of incinerating shrubs.

While some soldiers like Crego and Bastian searched for the fires, soldiers like Spc. Mark Bisceglie, a Cinnaminson, N.J., native and part-time serviceman and salesman of fire extinguishers, was responsible for water supply hookups.

"One trip back to the refill point was a seven or eight mile drive for us in

our big tankers which carry 660 gallons of water and 72 gallons of foam," Bisceglie said. "But it took almost 45 minutes for a round trip. By the time we returned from each trip, the fires seeped right into where we had just finished fighting before we left."

The average temperature of a forest blaze can range from hundreds to thousands of degrees – from a running brush fire or on that has involved the treetops or canopy where they enclose and trap firefighters, said Crego. Luckily, in the case of the

Cow's Nest, the canopy was unaffected. This reduced the velocity at which the fire traveled, the possibility of spontaneous combustion, and any subsequent firefighter injuries or casualties. Without their additional protective gear, things could have gotten a little "too hot to handle!"

Along with the roasting temperatures, the camouflaged, steaming eight-inch holes soldiers occasionally stumbled in, and the crashing trees made even more obstacles, and battling this fire, even more frustrating.

"Bees!" said Bastian sharply. "Very angry ... nasty bees. I took a few stingers from some who seemed a little upset about their burning hives." After a quick stop to see the medic, Bastian rejoined his team for the remainder of their daily, 16-hour duty days.

Despite the rigors of the battle that challenged them throughout the duration of the mission, the team vigilantly pursued the fire's inevitable death. But what was it exactly that inspired these soldiers to continue when the odds appeared dangerously stacked against them?

"Persistence!" said Bisceglie. "There is a thrill in firefighting," he admitted boldly. "Some people don't understand. As a firefighter, you constantly feel like you're losing, but with adrenaline working with you, if you keep fighting



Tina Beller

"WHERE THERE'S SMOKE" ...

Firefighting soldiers from the 99TH'S 369TH Engineer Co., Norristown, Pa., were called to the crow's nest.

FLAME! 99TH'S Firefighters pitch-in to put out fires at West Point

you'll get the upper hand. And when it's all over, I can sit down and relax and say, yes ... I did my best."

For the others on the team, contributing to the relief efforts was more than just adrenaline. "It was more important for me to help because of the pride I have for West Point, its traditions and heritage," said Bastian. "How could I stand by and watch it be destroyed knowing I have the knowledge and skill to preserve it?" he asked.

Fighting fires is a dangerous task – full of risk and uncertainties, but as Army Reserve soldiers and civilians of the community, it's reassuring to know the soldiers from the 369TH Engineer Platoon will selflessly offer their skills and lives to rescue whoever ... or whatever may be in danger! ■

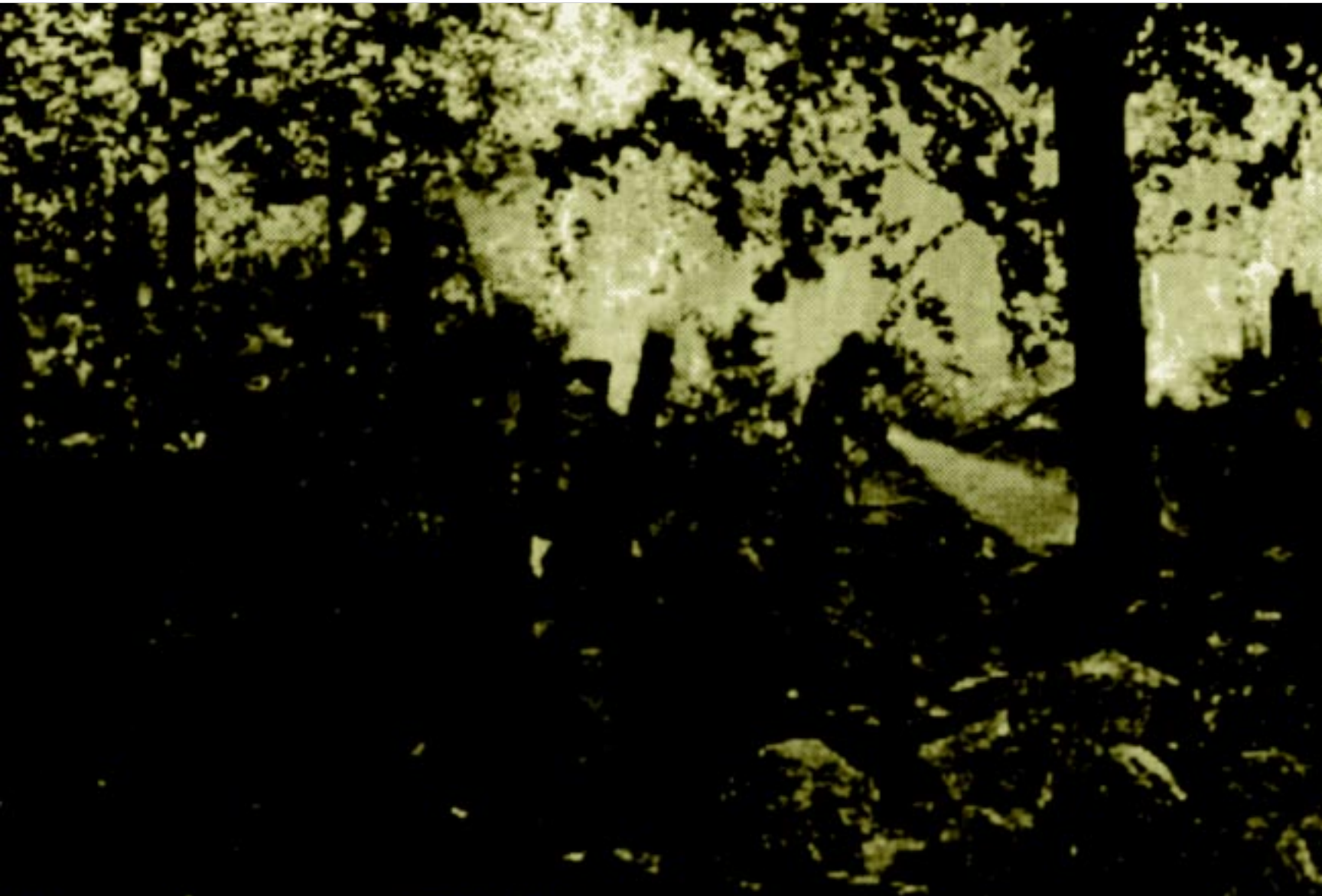
HOT, DRY SUMMER ...

369TH soldiers were on the scene fighting fires at West Point.

*Some people don't understand.
As a firefighter, you constantly feel like
you're losing, but with adrenaline
working with you, if you keep fighting
you'll get the upper hand.*

– Spc. Mark Bisceglie

Tina Beller



99TH Sergeant – Sports Standout!

by J.S. Augustine, *Herald-Standard Correspondent (reprinted by permission)*

If you were to look at the Women's Professional Football League's (WPFL) web site, you would come across a statement that reads: "You'll be curious to watch."

Former California resident, Christine Czaja, 26, who now resides in New Jersey, plays defensive back for the Minnesota Vixens and says, that statement couldn't be more true.

"Most people who come to see us play are skeptical at first," says Czaja, a communications graduate from California University of Pennsylvania, who broadcasted Vulcans football and basketball games. "Then after they've seen us play they can't get enough."

The WPFL, the first women's pro league in 20 years, began exhibition play in October 1999 with six teams, "No Limits" Barnstorming Tour, which was featured on ESPN, CBS Sunday Morning, the Jenny Jones Show, in Sports Illustrated, Sports Illustrated for Women, Forbes, and GQ magazines.

"It's about time for women to play football and get some recognition," says Czaja, a sergeant in the U.S. Army Reserve, stationed in the 430TH Replacement Co. in Brownsville. "We are playing other sports professionally that only used to be played by men. Take for instance, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA). Czaja says, even some NFL players are recognizing them as professionals."

"I have some friends back in Minnesota who know several Minnesota Vikings football players who have attended a few of our games and after seeing us play, they thought we played good and that it was really cool that the league existed," she says.

Women from the sports of rugby, fast pitch softball, hockey, basketball, soccer, and track and field get to showcase their talents in the WPFL, as well as lawyers, teachers, police officer and mothers.

"There's a quarterback on my team who is a NASA engineer," says Czaja, a member of the All Army Track Team and a two-time gold medalist in discus. "She's a great athlete as are most of the players. But, in order for our league to be successful, we need a justifiable talent pool."

Czaja says that only certain players were invited to training camp, which limits the talent selection.

"We need players who can actually play their position. Just because they're an athlete in this sport or that sport doesn't mean they're a good football player. And then team officials still put them on the roster to fill a position," says Czaja. "You now have girls who play football in high school, that's where you want to look for talent." Czaja's interest in the league began in the spring of this past year when she saw a flyer at a track meet that tryouts were being held.

"I saw the flyer and went to tryout for the Vixens." Says Czaja. "I guess they liked what they saw, they invited me to camp and I made the team." Czaja made the team originally as a tight end, but changed early in the season to defensive back.

"When I didn't have the ball, I was blocking, and enjoyed hitting players,"

says Czaja. "I thought I'd have more fun on defense, so I switched. When I got my first quarterback sack, I knew I made the right choice."

The WPFL follows the same rules as the NFL and are now in the process of marketing their product to sponsors to secure a television deal.

"Right now, the league is looking for one big-name sponsor, says Czaja, who had a helping hand in promoting the league when she was chosen by Gatorade to do an ad for them in ESPN magazine.

"Talks are underway with the Lifetime Television Network, which broadcast WNBA games, and also, ESPN2 to televise games next season. I just hope they can promote the league better, because this league can be successful." Another aspect that Czaja would love to change is how the teams are managed.

"Mostly men handled the teams and they treated us with kid gloves, like we didn't know what was going on," says Czaja. "They made conditioning and training camps too easy. The games were tougher than our workouts. Of all the sports I've played, this was the most physical."

The Vixens finished their season 0-6 and Czaja believes she may play for the Dallas Diamonds, a new team entering the league next season

"I liked playing for the Vixens. We had a rough first season, but most of our games were close, says Czaja. "The reason for the change is they have a female owner in Dallas which I'm extremely excited about, because a women's perspective can be heard in the league."

Czaja will be able to make the switch to Dallas rather easily because player contracts are with the league and not a certain team.

Salaries are also paid through the league and are based on the leagues profit at the end of the season.

Czaja adds, "Each player had to have a full-time job."

With teams already established in Minnesota, home of league operations, along with Lake Michigan, Long Island, Florida, Daytona Beach, and Hawaii, the league will add six more teams to its schedule next season that include: Dallas, Houston, New York, Washington, DC/Baltimore, St. Louis and Atlanta. "That's what the league needs is more teams. It will make the schedule better than it was last season. We played Lake Michigan five times," Czaja said. The WPFL will play an exhibition game Saturday at the NFL Experience held in Atlanta, Ga., as part of this year's Super Bowl XXXIV festivities. "We are even having an all-star game to be played at the Orange Bowl in Miami at the end of the month," says Czaja.

During the upcoming training camp, Czaja plans to learn more about her position and improve.

"This way I can have a big impact on whatever team I play for," she says. With her background in television and radio, she says that after her career is over in football, she hopes the league is still going strong and has a national television deal so she can announce the games.

To find out more about the WPFL, which will officially begin play this year, you can log onto its web site at www.womensprofootball.com. ■



Jack Gordon

TWO DIFFERENT JOBS ...

Sgt. Christine Czaja serves as a personnel specialist with the 430TH Replacement Co., but plays defensive back on the football field.

After a decade – We still remember

by Jack Gordon

GREENSBURG, Pa. – We tend to mark time in terms of decades – 10 years. To many of us now, who were here 10 years ago, it hardly seems as if it could be possible so much time has somehow, and quietly slipped behind us ... like a long, afternoon shadow. But it has. Indeed ... it has.

For the soldiers being honored here today, time ceased on February 25, 10 years ago when a Scud missile slammed into their barracks at Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Another time began then, for those who remained. It too began 10 years ago when military officers arrived at doorsteps to notify families that their loved one serving in uniform during Operation Storm ... had been killed in an enemy action.

For those who have remained, this time has passed slowly— much more slowly – with only the memories of Sgt. John Boxler; Spec. Beverly Clark; Spec. Tomas Stone; Spec. Anthony Madison; Spec. Steve Atherton; Sgt. Allan Craver; Spec. Richard Wolverton; Spec. Frank Keough; Sgt. Joseph Bongiorini; Sgt. Frank Walls, Sgt. Stephen Siko; and Spec. Christine Mayes ... in their hearts.

Every year throughout the past decade, we have gathered here with them, at this very special place dedicated to the memory of their spirit, and the spirit of their service. We gather again today, where once, long ago, we first met as strangers bound together by a terrible tragedy. We gather now as a network of supportive friends, and an extended family honoring those whom many of us had never met. But ... we are here.

Represented among us are veterans from every war in which American Armed Forces members— soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines – fought and died for freedom's cause. Each honor guard holds their colors high into a blue sky – a free sky – to recognize and honor the service of these soldiers who went, willingly, into not only the service of the United States Army, but into harms' way when they were called to duty.

The families and friends of these soldiers have changed— they have adapted – through the years; yet their anguish and empty hearts will always remind them of their loss. We ... remind them that we share that loss, for the loss of any soldier ... diminishes each of us. We have remembered every year, on this day, at this hour, on this moment, when the volleys are fired over the bronze figures which will stand— for all time – in honor of those who once answered America's call. We have remembered every year, when we hear the solemn notes of *Taps* echoing across the bleak background of a forest awaiting spring.

Together, those who have remained have persevered, each in his or her own way, and their paths have journeyed far from that fateful day now 10 years past, when yesterday became lost ... and where tomorrow – where hope – seemed a distant horizon. The shadow of February 25, 1991, is still cast over us, but there are warm places within it. One of them ... is here. ■

(Editor's Note: Jack Gordon is the Chief of Information, Public Affairs Office, for the 99TH RSC. Gordon was the PA Specialist for the 99TH (then) ARCOM, when the 14TH Quartermaster Detachment was mobilized. He served as a media liaison for the unit throughout the unit's deployment, enemy attack, redeployment, and KIA military funeral services.)

TRAGEDY HITS GREENSBURG UNIT

Though 10 years have now passed since that fateful day – Feb. 25, 1991, soldiers of the 99TH still pause each year to remember the service of soldiers whose lives were lost ... in freedom's name, in a faraway land overseas.

Their service – their sacrifice – the heritage and honor of the American soldier remains. We ... remember!



DEVASTATING ENEMY ATTACK ...
A lone soldier walks among the twisted wreckage in Dhahran, Saudia Arabia.



SCUD IMPACT CRATER ...
A soldier stands more than waist-deep in the impact crater that killed 28 and wounded 99 soldiers.



PROUD AND FREE ...
The bronze eagle at the 14TH Quartermaster Det. monument symbolizes the freedom of the United States.

A Decade Ago – We Fell

10 Years of Memories Gather at Greensburg, Pa. for

by Tony Johnson

GREENSBURG, Pa.—Ceremonies were held Feb. 25 to honor soldiers from the Army Reserve's 14TH Quartermaster Detachment based here, who were killed or injured 10 years ago in an Iraqi Scud missile attack during Operation Desert Storm. More than 500 family members, soldiers, veterans and local citizens filled the gymnasium at Greensburg Central Catholic High School to pay their respect.

Paula Boliver Wukovich, widow of Spec. John Boliver, Jr. who was killed in the attack, delivered some of the most poignant remarks at the ceremony. She described her emotion when she first learned of the attack and the feeling of dread she experienced when she heard the 14TH Quartermaster was housed in the makeshift warehouse barracks that had been struck.

"My life was shattered and I didn't see how the pieces would ever fit together again," said Wukovich. She stressed the importance of the family members of those killed and the other survivors from the attack getting together for these memorial services.

She went on to say that it has taken 10 years, but now she can say "I'm looking forward to tomorrow again, I'm fully happy. Speaking today has brought me full circle. It's the best tribute I can give to my husband."

Also speaking at the ceremony were U.S. Rep. John P. Murtha of Johnstown, Pa.; Maj. Gen. Rodney D. Ruddock, commander of the 99TH Regional Support

NOT IN VAIN ...

U.S. Army Reserve
Commander Maj. Gen.
Thomas Plewes (left); Matthew
Wukovich (son of Spec. John
Bolivar, 14TH QM Det. KIA); U.S.
Congressional Representative
John P. Murtha; and 99TH
Commander Maj. Gen. Rodney
D. Ruddock.

REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN ...

Melissa Wukovich (daughter of
Spec. John Bolivar, 14TH QM Det.
KIA) and Maj. Gen. Rodney D.
Ruddock place a wreath during
the ceremony.



Kelly Luster



Rich Gribenas

It War's Loss at Home

Memorial Service Honoring 14TH QM Detachment

Command; Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack L. Tilley; and state director for U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum.

The Iraqi Scud missile attack on Feb. 25, 1991 was the single most devastating attack on U.S. forces during the war. Twenty-eight soldiers were killed and 43 were wounded. Eighty-one percent of the unit's 69 soldiers were killed or wounded and the 14TH suffered the greatest number of casualties of any coalition unit during the war.

"When these soldiers left Greensburg, many of you were here exchanging final embraces and whispering, as I did, prayers that they might fulfill their duty and return safely," said Ruddock, who served as chief of staff of the 99TH during the Gulf War. "Know now, here today, that their lives were lost in the truest spirit of the American soldier, and that the people of Kuwait remain free of the ruthless tyranny today for *their* effort."

First Sergeant Terry Davis, a soldier of the 14TH who was wounded in the attack, also spoke at the ceremony. "Time has made it easier," Davis said, "but we still miss them each day."

The headquarters for the 14TH Quartermaster is located adjacent to the high school where the first ceremony was held. A solemn memorial to the soldiers of the 14TH killed or wounded was constructed outside the headquarters and dedicated on the one-year anniversary of the Scud missile attack. Following the ceremony at the high school, the crowds moved outside to the memorial for a wreath laying ceremony.

Matthew and Melissa Wukovich, the children of Spec. Boliver, and Joshua Davis, son of 1ST Sgt. Davis, assisted with placement of the wreaths at the memorial.

Wreaths were placed on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania, the U.S. Army, Army Reserve, and on behalf of the 99TH Regional Support Command.

Following the placement of the wreaths, the names of each of the soldiers killed in action were read aloud, followed by a 21-gun salute and *Taps*. ■

TIME TO REFLECT ...

More than 500 friends and family members (left) gathered to remember and honor the service of soldiers killed and wounded in the 14TH Quartermaster Det. during Operation Desert Storm, 10 years ago.



FOR THOSE GONE ...
World War II Veteran Julius Falcon has played *Taps* for the 14TH QM Det. memorial service since 1991.



SALUTING THEIR SERVICE ...
Every American remembered ... and honored those soldiers killed in freedom's cause 10 years ago.

NCO recalls scud missile attack

by John D. Wagner

The night had fallen like a great blanket, and Staff Sgt. Chris Cargill yearned for some relief from the grueling duty of fuel convoys during Desert Storm. Then he heard a BOOM!

The location — Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia. Cargill and some other troops had been sent for R&R and to pick up supplies. An Iraqi Scud missile hit a warehouse being used for inprocessing and housing soldiers arriving in the theater.

The building was blasted to ruins and a fire was blazing. Cargill, of the 348TH Transportation Company out of Phoenix, took immediate action, braving extreme danger in a situation that ultimately won him the Bronze Star. Now the unit's first sergeant, he recalled the dramatic day February 25, 1991.

"I put on my protective mask," Cargill said. "I rounded up about half a dozen soldiers and we entered the warehouse. Ammo was igniting and ricocheting from the fire."

Cargill knew the situation was very dangerous. "I thought, 'This is a real bad situation,'" he said. "I thought there was only about a 50 percent chance I'd live through it."

Cargill and the others, slipping on the bloody ground, initially went after the soldiers still alive. Cargill brought out about 15,

including some who could still walk. Then they brought out the dead. They pulled some 40 to 50 soldiers from the building for the next, hour period. Saudi Arabian fire fighters arrived on the scene, but wouldn't go into the building apparently fearing the igniting ammunition. Cargill said. U.S. help later came. The final count was 28 people killed and 99 wounded. Cargill earlier helped set up a triage area to do initial screening and emergency treatment. "This involved putting on bandages, keeping them still and verbally comforting them," he said.

The intensity hit Cargill afterward. "I went back to my base ... by the time I was pretty much a zero," he said. "I went into shock myself. I didn't sleep for two or three days."

Incredibly, Cargill, now 34, didn't think he deserved the Bronze Star he received for his valor: "I just thought I was just doing something of a humanitarian nature," said the blue-eyed, New Zealand-born NCO.

Sgt. 1ST Class David Nicholas, a former soldier of the 348TH and a Desert Storm Veteran, praised Cargill's actions.

"What he did was heroic and lifesaving," Nicholas said. "It's what we all want to be as soldiers. He proved himself by doing this." ■

Army Reserve ambassadors visit Arkansas bridging exercise

by Sheila Tunney

FORT CHAFFEE, Ark. – Nine of the 99TH RSC's Army Reserve ambassadors donned their life jackets like every other soldier training here today and climbed aboard one of the many bridge erection boats scattered on this one-mile stretch of the Arkansas River. Their mission of observing and interacting with 99TH leaders and troops while they are training has netted them a pre-dawn, interactive tour of Army Reserve bridge companies in action.

Giving the ambassadors a show to remember, the troops of the 299TH Engineer Company, Fort Belvoir, Va., and 459TH Engineer Company, Bridgeport, W.Va., lead them on a boat tour of the site, then intimately demonstrated how to construct one of the Army's ribbon bridges. The ambassadors were even given the freedom to board the growing bridge as new bays were connected.

What the ambassadors gain from their continuing visits to 99TH troops is one of the most important aspects of their functions. They gather critical input from leaders and troops from all levels about their concerns and goals, then translate that information for use by public officials, civic and

business organizations, and officials in the Army Reserve hierarchy which they brief on a regular basis.

"They are the U.S. Army Reserve's representatives to the public. They attend training so they can speak with first-hand knowledge about the Army Reserve," said Maj. Gen. Rodney D. Ruddock, 99TH RSC commander.

Community leaders and elected officials not only learn about their state's Army Reserve units' capabilities and roles in national defense from the ambassadors, but are also asked what types of training and support Reserve units can provide to help their communities.

"Army Reserve ambassadors are able to go out and see the training the Army Reserve is doing and relate its importance to various audiences like business associations and legislators," said Pennsylvania Ambassador, Fred Fair.

"We come and see the units in action because training and mission priorities change – sometimes in just a couple of years."

Also serving as the "eyes, ears and voice" of the Army Reserve units in their states, the

ambassadors communicate feedback from both Army Reserve leaders and the public back to the Chief, Army Reserve.

But the ambassadors' roles are not limited to the "big picture," according to Fair. "Often, individual soldiers face problems with their employers or school faculty members who don't support their requirement for training. The ambassadors will do all that they can, often recommending employers receive 'patriot awards' for their support".

"Simple things, like speaking with a professor and asking to let a soldier take a test earlier or later than scheduled is something we can do — so the soldier can be successful at both school and his commitment to the Army Reserve," said Fair.

And commitment is what these ambassadors are witnessing today in the leaders who developed the scenarios and facilitated the opportunity to train here, but moreover in the NCOs and soldiers of the 459TH and the 299TH Engineer Companies, who have safely lead them through a complex bridging operation. ■

Steve Harmon



TOUR OF DUTY – KOSOVO!

Peacekeeping mission makes soldier aware of “bigger picture”

by Chuck Joseph

I didn't know where Kosovo was when the trouble started there, and I didn't care. “Atrocities, Yeah, I right,” I said. “Here we go, again, sticking our noses into someone else's business, and they don't even want us there.”

When the NATO bombing started, I didn't realize I would have a front-row seat to the peacekeeping and nation-building missions that would follow. What I discovered during the five months I served there, was that we were not only wanted — we were desperately *needed*.

It's hard to explain what actually happened without pointing the finger at one ethnic group or the other. I found that both sides had people who committed terrible acts upon another. Unfortunately, that's the way it has been for hundreds of years.

My Kosovo education began at Fort Benning, Ga. It was kind of funny. Civilian interpreters, reporters and Red Cross workers were going through mobilization training with soldiers.

That's where I met a Bosnian Serb named Jon. He was headed for Kosovo to serve as an interpreter. He explained the root problem, as he perceived it, as one of economics. “The group that's in power has all the money and all jobs,” Jon said. It was all pretty simple to him. He didn't think it was a religious war.

I met my first English-speaking Albanian Muslim on the ground in Kosovo. Her name was Maki. She spoke English, Serbian, German, Russian, some Spanish and her native Albanian. She was 19, and had lived her entire life in Gjilane, where our base camp was located.

Maki loved working with our public affairs office. She said we got to see things and travel to places that many soldiers who serve at the base camp were not able to experience. She was especially proud of her ability to speak several regional languages. Very few interpreters would speak both Serbian and Albanian. It wasn't considered proper. Everyone was still expected to be on one side or the other — everyone except for us — the soldiers serving in the Kosovo Protection Forces.

Maki didn't particularly want to be on one side or the other. She told me she wasn't afraid to be seen in public speaking Serbian. “If Kosovo is to move beyond this, we must be as one,” she said. Given her situation, I felt she was very brave. I didn't know how forgiving she was. After I had earned her trust and friendship, she told me about her sister.

(continued on page 51)



HELPING THE PATIENTS ...

An Albanian orthopedic surgeon (center) works with a U.S. Army doctor (left) during an operation where the patient's bone is chiseled.



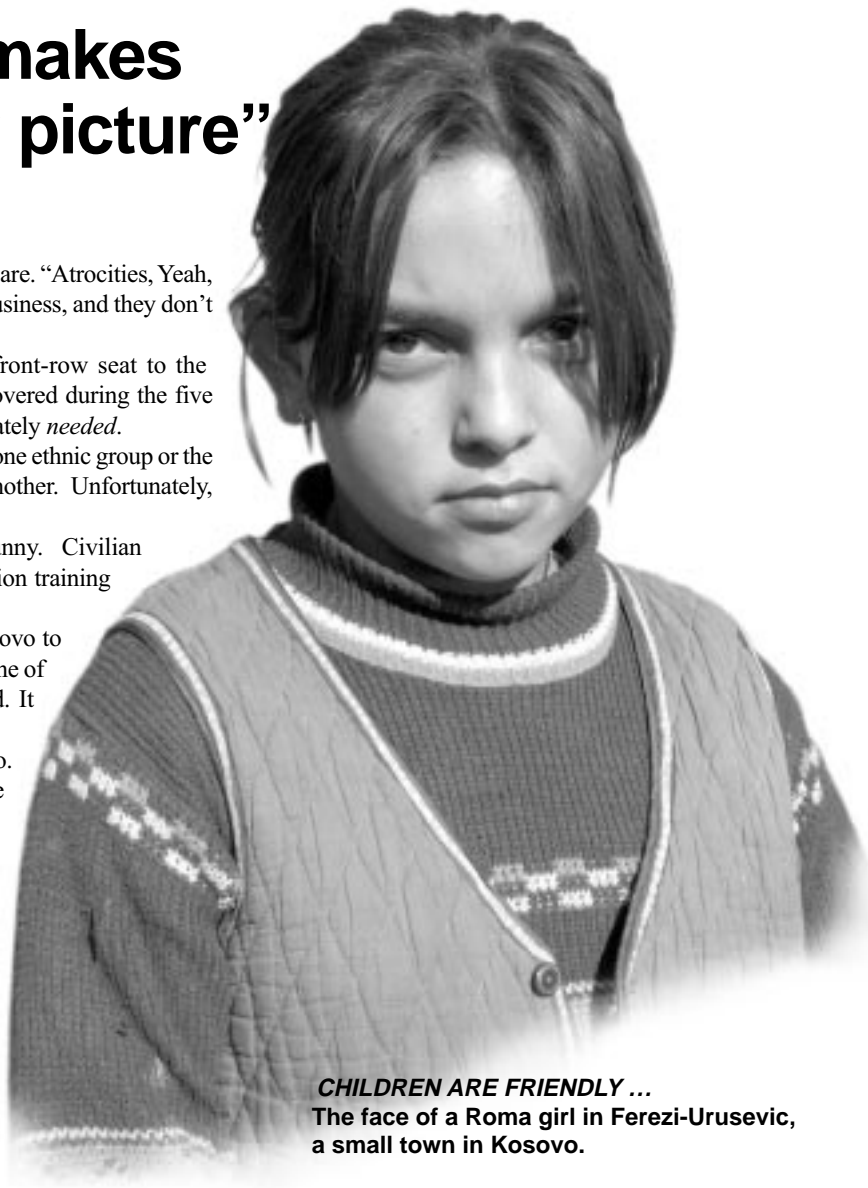
LOOKING FOR WEAPONS ...

Soldiers searching for weapons found a rifle wrapped in a feed sack under a pile of hay in a shed. Disarming all factions is critical to maintaining peace.



ANOTHER STEELERS FAN!

No matter how far from the 99TH's Headquarters a soldier may travel — everyone knows the Pittsburgh Steelers! American clothing is often part of the humanitarian efforts.



CHILDREN ARE FRIENDLY ...

The face of a Roma girl in Ferezi-Urusevic, a small town in Kosovo.



HE STILL SMILES ...

A Roma boy in Ferezi-Urosivic grins for American soldiers patrolling his village.



ALWAYS THE VICTIMS ...

Two Roma children and a Serbian child use battlefield rubble as a playground in their neighborhood – it was destroyed in retaliation by Albanians after the Serbian Army left Kosovo.



UNHOLY HOLY WARS ...

A damaged mosque in Cernica, a town with a population comprising half Serbian and half Albanian. The christian church in Cernica was also destroyed.



PROTECTING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ...

U.S. troops guard a newly-built Serbian church "24-7" near Gijlane, Kosovo.



VIOLENCE BEGAT VIOLENCE ...

After the Serbian Army left, so did Serbs in minority pockets of towns like Zegra. Seeking retribution of revenge, Albanians desecrated Serb cemeteries.



A PASTORAL SCENE ...

Even in war there exists beauty. A shepherd watches his goats on a hillside near Novobrd, Kosovo.

Let a soldier's pictures share a thousand words ... and more.



JOINT FORCES EFFORT ...

U.S. worked with Russian soldiers in a joint forces humanitarian mission that provided school supplies to children in Kamenica, located in the Russian security sector.



photo essay by Chuck Joseph

NEW WINTER CLOTHES ...

An Albanian girl from Tullar is happy to get warm clothing for the cold winter approaching. U.S. Army unit clothing drives "from home" for children in Kosovo are common.

DOES IT FIT? ...

A U.S. Army sergeant helps a young Albanian boy with a shirt. The unit had their families at home send 21 boxes of clothing the soldiers then distributed to needy villagers.



(continued on page 49)

Maki had a 14-year old sister killed by a Serbian soldier. She watched her sister shot in the stomach in the hallway of her family home. Maki cried as she told me. Then, she gathered her strength and declared she still thought there could be peace in Kosovo. She remained optimistic; even it was born of slim hope.

A quick drive from Gjilane is the town of Zegra. We escorted reporters there often. It's what they had come to see, since destruction, death and despair all seem to be good fodder for the news machine. In Zegra there is plenty of all three. Zegra epitomized the horror of Kosovo.

The Serbian Orthodox Christian minority controlled the town. Albanian Muslims didn't fare too well. When NATO bombing drove the Serbian Army out, the Serbian minority population fled to the closest Serbian community. The Albanians then took advantage of the power vacuum created by the Army's departure and sought revenge. They exacted their rage on Serbian cemeteries, churches and houses. They left nothing but broken shells of houses and shattered tombstones for returning Serbs.

The burning of churches and vandalizing cemeteries was a common practice throughout Kosovo. Both sides did equally well at desecrating each other's places of worship. NATO now stands guard over churches, cemeteries and shrines in Kosovo. What a contradictory sight as you arrive at a church surrounded by sandbags, machine-gun nests and concertina wire. But it's everywhere; and it's a fact of life. It's the way things are.

There were more positive signs beginning to surface before I left Kosovo. Serbs and Albanians were working together in a stone quarry. One businessman hired Serbs, Albanians and Romas. He proclaimed he owned an international business with international workers. Signs of rebuilding were everywhere. The international aid organizations had kicked their operations into high gear and things were starting to happen. Perhaps it was the hope Maki had prayed for.

Predictably though, the occasional hand grenade would still be thrown through someone's window. Most of these incidents were threats designed to make someone move out or not come back. Protests would flare and KFOR would keep them under control. There were still weapons everywhere. The Albanian rebel forces were moving their operations out of Kosovo, and into Macedonia and Serbia, proper. Many Albanians still want independence from Serbia, and are quite willing to fight for it.

I discovered one thing with certainty – Kosovo would deteriorate quickly if NATO, or another impartial peacekeeping force were not authorized, emplaced and operational there. I didn't witness any atrocities, but there was ample evidence of them. Mass graves were found. Not as many as predicted, but they were there. All too believable stories of murder, rape and wanton destruction abound, as does their aftermath.

We often say, where there is smoke, there must be fire. Fires of revenge and hatred still smolder in the hearts of many. The healing has begun for some, but others aren't willing to forgive. My tour in Kosovo has shown me the worst of humanity. But it has also shown me the best of humanity. The peacekeepers are still there, and probably will be ... for a long time. I now believe that this is the way it has to be, and that America must not turn her back ... or her heart ... away from Kosovo. ■

(Editor's Note: In Nov. 2001, a bid for Kosovo's independence was rejected by European foreign ministers. NATO first entered Kosovo in 1999, after some 200,000 Serbs and other non-Albanians fled the province in fear of reprisal attacks from Ethnic Albanians. In a population exceeding two million, about 80,000 to 100,000 Serbs remain in Kosovo.)

Field Artillery Soldiers Never Die – They Just Keep Partying at “Redlegs” Ball

by Phil Serra

Former soldiers from the 479TH Field Artillery Brigade (assigned to the 99TH ARCOM), their spouses and guests, reunited for the 12TH Field Artillery Ball. The ball, an annual event when the 479TH was an active unit, retired in 1997 with the 479TH's colors.

In November 2000, soldiers once assigned to the unit met and decided to revive some of the old traditions. In an effort to restore the camaraderie of the soldiers, an association was formed and began to work planning the ball.

The event was hosted at the Ramada Inn in DuBois, Pa. For the 85 attendees, the evening provided an opportunity to renew friendships and reminisce about their days with the 479TH. An evening of cocktails, dinner, and dancing was enhanced by the traditional ceremonies of toasts, comments, and the mixing of field artillery punch. In addition to these, Command Sgt Maj. Greg Holland re-instituted a tradition begun by a group of Civil War Veterans in 1890 —“The Last Man” tradition.

According to “The Last Man” tradition, a soldier of a Pennsylvania Civil War regiment had “liberated” a bottle of Confederate whiskey during the fall of Atlanta in 1865, and kept the bottle intact for the regiment’s 25TH anniversary of the war’s end. At that time, the regimental veterans decided the bottle would go to the last surviving soldier in the group, so that he might “raise a glass” in memory of his comrades who had gone before him.



photo courtesy of Phil Serra

“REDLEGS” ALL SMILES ...

Col. (Ret.) Phil Serra (center) greets all field artillerymen and their guests at the annual “Redlegs” Ball.

In the spirit of brotherhood common to combat arms units, the 479TH began its own tradition. Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Mosier, a former 479TH command sergeant major, built a beautiful oak and glass display case to house a bottle of Glenfiddich Scotch and an old canteen cup from the 479TH. A brass plaque with the inscription, “For the Last Man, 479TH Field Artillery Brigade,” is mounted atop the case. It is the hope of former 479TH soldiers that the old unit colors and the display case will one day pass down to the “the last man” and he’ll be able to raise a canteen cup to his past brothers in the field artillery.

The 479TH Field Artillery Brigade Association is seeking all former soldiers who served with the 479TH and its two subordinate battalions – the 4TH Bn., 8TH Field Artillery and the 4TH Bn., 92TH Field Artillery, as well as all past recipients of the St. Barbara Award. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact one of the current officers listed. You can also email us at

REDLEGRPT@aol.com. Association officers: President, Col. Philip M. Serra (Ret.) (412) 486-6955; Vice President, Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Holland (Ret.) (814) 383-8018; Secretary, LT. Col. Edward Wolff (814) 277-6563; Treasurer, Command Sgt. Maj. John Midla (Ret); Master-At-Arms, Lt. Col. Bruce Clark (Ret), Committeeman at Large, Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Manno (Ret). ■

KING OF BATTLE

479TH Field Artillery Battalion, 99TH U.S. Army Reserve Command

by Jack Gordon

During the force realignment and restructuring of America’s armed forces during the 1990s, combat units were removed from the Army Reserve, transforming its missions to those of combat support and combat service support. The 99TH Army Reserve Command then had one combat unit – the 479TH Field Artillery Brigade, located in Pittsburgh.

Structurally, the brigade had two battalions, each with multiple batteries assigned to Reserve centers in both Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The King of Battle was “big-time” in the 99TH

during those decades it existed in the command, attracting soldiers who felt more comfortable at the “pigtail” of a howitzer than behind a desk.

The brigade also had bragging rights by having a few female soldiers among its ranks. More than 60 soldiers either volunteered for duty or were individually activated during Operation Desert Storm, some assigned to FA (Field Artillery batteries, and others where their MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) was needed.

Of those 60, eight were wounded in action, and one – Spec. Thomas Stone – was killed when a

Scud missile slammed into a transient troop barracks building in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Thomas was assigned to the 14TH Quartermaster Detachment, from Greensburg, Pa.

Though the Army’s “reserve” FA units are now assigned to the National Guard organization, a few of those soldiers still serve the 99TH in other capacities now, and even those who have retired yet get together for special “Redlegs” FA balls. Once served ... the blood of the King of Battle still streams through the veins of those whose calling cried ... “Field Artillery!” ■

GAS!

When it's time to "mask-up" and "move out," 99TH soldiers get ready!

by Chris Coleman

FORT A.P. HILL, Va. – The alarm sounds and the chemical suit-clad soldiers tear open the nuclear, biological and chemical protective mask carriers. Quickly and calmly, they pull the mask on, tighten the straps, and strap the hood into place. "Gas, Gas, Gas," muffles from under the many soldiers' masks, as they pump their arms. Close call, but the soldiers' training seem to have paid off and since they'd donned their masks in under nine seconds. No one should be exposed to breathing possible chemical agents.

Soon a few soldiers notice a small headache and slight tightness in their chest. "It's hot out and difficult to breath in the mask, that's all," they tell themselves. A few minutes later, the tightness explodes into wheezing as they begin to drool uncontrollably. Nausea overcomes a few and they begin to vomit.

Now they know something is wrong and signal for help. Confused soldiers look at each other not quite sure what the problem is. Is it too hot with the suit on? Possible heat injury? Some soldiers rush to help the sick ones, but it is too late. Before they realize what is going on, their fellow soldiers collapse onto the ground overcome with embarrassment as they feel their bowels release and flow down their leg.

Lying on the earth paralyzed they forget their embarrassment as their thoughts turn to their loved ones and they realize they are going to die. The healthy soldiers realize what is happening and try to inject the sick soldiers with atropine – but it is too late. Convulsions overtake some of the soldiers as they start to black out and their attempts to fight the respiratory failure overtaking their bodies prove fruitless. Their vision fades to black as the convulsions – and their pulses – stop. The healthy soldiers look down through the misused masks at the haunting, empty eyes of the dead soldiers in horror and disbelief.

If soldiers should ever become exposed to a NBC agent, like the fictitious sarin gas attack just depicted above, a faulty seal, loose canister or defective mask can mean the difference between life and death.

In order to ensure a nightmarish, worse-case scenario like this never occurs and to improve soldiers confidence in the tools they use to protect themselves from chemical attacks, the soldiers of the 300TH Transportation Group,

Edgemont, Pa., went beyond merely simulating their reaction to a NBC attack and placed their soldiers in a gas chamber filled with CS Gas.

"They've got new masks and we're going to make sure they fit and they can breathe normally wearing them. It's going to build trust in the equipment," said Lt. Col. Jim Beirnes, 300TH Commander.

Beirnes said this was one of the most important common tasks a soldier could learn. "This weekend is the first weekend the entire group has trained together in 10 years, and we're doing this – because this is something *everyone* will master," he said.

As the soldiers march into the cinderblock chamber, the group's Nuclear, Biological and Chemical non-commissioned officers have them walk in a circle.

Soon the soldiers outside the chamber laugh, hearing the soldiers inside count out "one, two three, One!" as the NBC NCOs run them through a series of push-ups and side-straddle hops.

"We want to make sure the mask stays sealed when the soldiers are moving around because they would be moving around if there were an actual attack. This way they know and we know their gaining confidence in the equipment," said Master Sgt. Tamara Barber, 300TH NBC NCO.

Some soldiers found they either hadn't sealed their mask properly or had a loose canister. They stumble from the open chamber door with teary eyes and flapping arms where medics guide them to a rest area and urge them to keep their hands away from their eyes and implore them to "Do the Bird, baby!"

It was an event Barber said they were prepared for. "We had a safety briefing and went over the procedures on a sand table before we brought the soldiers here. We've got the safety NCO and medics on-hand to ensure the safety of our soldiers," she said.

Others chose to remove their masks inside to get a taste of how chemical attack symptoms of a feel. The CS didn't just

clear the soldier's sinuses; the soldiers said it reinforced the importance of the training.

"Usually you train by putting the mask on and walking around, but when you walk around in there and feel fine and then take you mask off and can't breathe – you realize what this training is all about," said Spc. Dan Henderson, 223RD Transportation Co., Edgemont, Pa. ■



TEARS OF TRAINING ...

A soldier exits the gas chamber after getting a "whiff" of CS gas during the 300TH TC's NBC training at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

Chris Coleman

ABOVE & BEYOND

"REDLEG" CONTINUES TRADITION ... AS NON-TRADITIONAL SOLDIER

Lt. Col. Hazel L. Robinson, of Clinton, Md., was recently selected to become the first female Director of Security, Plans and Operations of the 300th Area Support Group, a 99TH RSC Major Subordinate Command located at Fort Lee, Va. The 22 person staff of the directorate is responsible for deliberate and crisis action planning and execution of contingency operations for the Group Headquarters. The 300TH Area Support Group is a logistics headquarters responsible for the reception, staging, onward movement and integration of combat forces into the theater of operations. Robinson is a 1992 graduate of the Command and General Staff College. Her most recent assignment was as the Mortuary Affairs Officer, 9TH Theater Support Command, Fort Belvoir, Va. She works in a civilian capacity as a Senior Economist at the Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. Robinson also holds the distinct honor of being a "Redleg." She is one of only 157 female officers in the Army whose primary branch is field artillery. ■

SOLDIER SUBDUES WOULD-BE RAPIST

A soldier from the 304TH Military Police Company, Martinsburg, W.Va., received an Army Commendation Medal for going beyond the call of duty in displaying courage and integrity – a true testament to the military police ethic.

Sgt. Frank Lokant, while attempting to enjoy a quiet evening out with his wife, subdued and restrained an assailant who was committing a felony.

During a Saturday evening, while waiting to see a movie at the Greenbrier Valley Mall, danger lurked in the shadows in an open, ladies' restroom.



BATTLE OF BULGE REMEMBERED ...

Each year on Dec. 17, the 99TH remembers 99TH Infantry Division veterans who served in World War II by placing a memorial wreath at the command's flagpole. 99TH combat veteran Harry McCracken (left) and a fellow World War II veteran of the 99TH represented the division's soldiers at the ceremony.

Lokant's wife came close to the terrible reality of what all women fear ... rape!

Waiting for his wife outside the door, Lokant never imagined what life had arranged for him. Hearing a scream he believed to be from his wife in the restroom, Lokant responded.

Entering the restroom immediately, he realized two individuals were struggling in the last stall, and he confirmed that it was indeed his wife who was screaming. He attempted to open the door to the stall, but couldn't because the door was locked. Suddenly a man burst from the stall and Lokant, using a technique he'd learned during military police training, stopped him. Lokant asked, "What's going on?" The man, using profanity, indicated he intended to rape the woman.

Using military police tactics to restrain the suspect, Lokant immediately took him to the floor and held him until state troopers arrived.

The suspect, who then attempted to assault two paramedics and the state trooper, is charged with four felony counts of assault.

The 304TH MP Company commander recommended Lokant for the award, since the incident during the unit's drill weekend, and reflected the ethics and ability of a military policeman to intervene in crisis situations. ■

99TH SOLDIER SELECTED AS POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Capt. Michael Adkins, HHC, 332ND Ordnance Bn. (Ammo), was recently named Officer of the

Year of Cabell County, W.Va. The 332ND is located in Kenova, W. Va., and assigned to the 38TH Ordnance Group, one of the Army's largest ordnance units.

Adkins, a Deputy Sheriff and veteran of three years with the Sheriff's Department, was nominated by Sheriff Kim Wolfe and Chief Deputy Jim Scheidler. He has been serving the Army Reserve for 15 years.

"Adkins is an individual who leads by example and has always been willing to go beyond his normal duties to assist others," said Chief Deputy Jim Scheidler.

Adkins resides in Huntington, W.Va., with his wife Jennifer and two children, Andrew and Emily.

The award is sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 1067, in Huntington. ■

14TH QM SUPPLY EXCELLENCE

The 14TH Quartermaster Detachment, Greensburg, Pa., was awarded the 99TH Regional Support Command's Chief of Staff Supply Excellence Award for FY 2001. The 14TH's Commander, Capt. Brian Farester, accepts the award from Maj. Mary Hughes, representing the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics, 99TH RSC. Hughes is a former commander of the 14TH. ■



Jack Gordon

99TH RESERVE SOLDIER CITED FOR BRAVERY

by Anthony Todd Carlisle

Quick thinking by a 99TH Regional Support Command soldier probably saved hundreds of lives in a Frederick, Md. community. The Frederick Police Department recently awarded Officer First Class Dennis Dudley a Bronze Star for his actions earlier this year. Dudley, who has served with Frederick Police Department for six years, is a major in the U.S. Army Reserve, and commander of the 354TH Mobile Public Affairs Detachment in Oakdale, Pa.

Dudley was one of six members of the Frederick Police Department to receive the Bronze Star in the department's first such awards ceremony. Part of the criteria for the recognition reads "it may be awarded for an act involving personal danger under aggravated or hostile circumstances, and for



Kelly Luster

SURROUNDED BY STARS ...

World War II combat veteran and bugler Julius Falcon was recognized by USAR Commander Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Plewes and 99TH RSC Commander Maj. Gen. Rodney D. Ruddock. Falcon has played *Taps* every year for the past decade at the Feb. 25 14TH QM Det. Memorial Service.

protecting or saving the life of another."

The department recognized Dudley for his actions during an incident that occurred in January. Dudley had just left duty and was on his way home when he spotted a vehicle traveling about 75 miles per hour in a 25 mile speed zone – without headlights. Veering out of control, it then smashed into two houses, cutting down an utility pole and severing a natural gas main line.

When Dudley reached the vehicle, the unconscious driver was lying outside the car. A portion of a streetlight was sticking in the engine of the car. Dudley, who had called for back-up, said the car was smoking, hissing and sparking. Another officer who arrived on the scene noticed the ripped gas lines. The noise and scent of the escaping gas permeated an area of about two to four city blocks.

Since all the doors were jammed, Dudley climbed into the vehicle's passenger side window and turned off the car's ignition. Fearing an explosion, another officer who had arrived on the scene removed the injured driver from the area while Dudley and the other officer went door to door to evacuate residents to a safe location.

Dudley said his main concern was shutting off the engine to keep the car from going up in flames, and diverting a larger disaster from the fire then igniting the natural gas.

"I was in a big cloud of gas going into a burning car," Dudley said. "I thought, 'I'm going to die right here.' I tried not to think about it, or I wouldn't have been able to get the car shut off."



Rich Gribbenas

VISITING OUR VETS ...

A program started by Sgt. 1ST Class Jennifer Vorum, Retention Office, 99TH RSC, allows volunteer soldiers to visit hospitalized veterans. Sgt. 1ST Class Judy Ann Bellefleur, DCSPER, 99TH RSC, gets a holiday smile from a veteran.

Dudley, who has been with the 354TH for nearly a year, said he used both his military and police training during the incident.

"Military training has taught me to act instead of react," Dudley said. "The police force has taught me to take positive action and control of a situation." Don't call him a hero, though.

"Everyday, cops do things that put them in danger," Dudley said. ■

BULLETS & BRIEFS

GOT "TATS?" BETTER READ THE ARMY'S NEW TATTOO POLICY

Due to soldiers' continuing confusion and questions regarding what "tats" are OK...and which ones aren't, the U.S. Army Recruiting Command commander has asked that the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel clarify the Army's tattoo policy. Here is the revised policy that is going into AR 670-1.

"Any tattoo or brand that is prejudicial to good order and discipline is prohibited. Tattoos or brands on the face, neck or head that are visible while wearing a Class A or B uniform are prohibited. Tattoos or brands on other areas of the body that are visible while wearing a Class A uniform, and that detract from soldierly appearance are prohibited."

To clarify policies on the wear of the Army uniform, including tattoos, access the web page at: www.odcsper.army.mil. ■

PAY INQUIRIES? CONNECT TO HOTLINE!

What is it?

The **Military Pay Information Line**, a self-service telephone inquiry only line, provides service members access to pay information 24 hours a day. To use the Interactive Voice Response System

(IVRS) you need a Personal Identification Number (PIN), your Social Security Number (SSN) and a touch tone telephone. Current information can be obtained prior to receipt of your printed leave and Earnings Statement.

What inquiry information is available?

Active duty – Net Pay, Direct Deposit, Allotments, Taxes, Leave Balance, W2 Information.

Reserve/National Guard – Net Pay, Direct Deposit (current and previous), SGLI, Election, Taxes, W2 Information.

Recently Separated – Final Account Audit Status, W2 Information. Active duty and recently separated callers may access information on Bonds (safekeeping data, making a lost/stolen report, direct access to a technician), Estimating Civilian Retirement Earnings, and Non-receipt of Allotments.

How do I use it?

You need a touch tone telephone (cellular phones may not work) and the temporary PIN. When you first access the Military Pay Information Line, you will choose your permanent PIN. To enhance security, your Leave and Earnings Statement will be annotated whenever your PIN is changed. Because this line is for inquiry purposes only, you may chose to provide your SSN and PIN to someone close to you so that person would have access to your information. Of course, this is up to your discretion. Remember, if you share your SSN and PIN with someone you are providing inquiry capability to the pay information listed above. ■

EMPLOYER CONFLICT: GET HELP NOW

by Jack Gordon

Keeping your employer informed of your military duty is *your* responsibility. Let them know, in writing, as early as possible that you will be performing military service on days that may conflict with your work schedule.

In most cases, employers work with Army Reserve soldiers so they are released to serve. If an official memorandum from your unit commander is required, ensure it is requested through your unit and provided to your employer in a timely manner.

Employer support problems result from a lack of communication between soldier and employer.

If your employer has provided exceptional support for your military service, recognize them by nominating them for an ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve) award.

If, after making every effort to resolve an employer conflict directly due to military service participation, call your state's ESGR office, or the National ESGR Committee's toll free number, 1-800-336-4590. You may also visit the organization's web site at <http://www.esgr.org>.

But always remember that effective communication — as one might expect — is the key to achieving understanding and support. Be sure to keep your employer apprised of your military requirements, and don't forget to thank them for understanding your military commitments. ■



Rich Griebner

STILL SERVING THE 99TH ...

WW II veteran of the 99TH Infantry Division Harry McCracken (left) and U.S. Army Reserve Ambassador from Pennsylvania Fred Fair get ready to represent the 99TH in the annual Veterans Day Parade in Pittsburgh. Fair, now retired from military service, once served as the 99TH ARCOM's command sergeant major. He is also active in the 99TH Infantry Division Association, the non-profit group raising funds to place a bronze monument dedicated to 99TH WW II veterans, at the command's new headquarters facility in Moon Township, Pa.

Erie air show features 99TH's Force Provider Unit to Pennsylvania public

by Jack Gordon

ERIE, Pa. – “I want to do this one more time,” said little “Joe,” a child seated at the wheel of one of the 542ND Quartermaster (Force Provider) Company’s trucks on display at the annual Erie Air Show here. “Joe” was getting a kick from having the truck’s bass horn respond to his finger pressing a black button on the dashboard.

It’s experiences like these that endear the soldiers of the 542ND to the city of Erie, located on the south shore of Lake Erie in northwestern Pennsylvania. The unit has been a viable presence in the area at most public events and the show offers additional opportunity to raise public awareness of today’s Army Reserve soldier – and the mission of the 542ND. The soldiers also realize that the public profile they establish today may directly relate to the community support they may one day receive, including employer support.

“It’s outstanding community awareness,” said Sgt. 1ST Class Luke Davidoff, 542ND QM Co. “The old-timers, the children – even my children – like to come out and see soldiers, or daddy, in uniform. They like seeing all the equipment we have – it’s fun, and great for everyone!”

With the long arm of the unit’s crane fully extended and sporting a banner proclaiming the Army Reserve, the 542ND is making its mark here.

The unit serves as an early prototype developed after Operation Desert Storm, when the need for better field conditions for soldiers on deployments became evident. The soldiers assigned to the 542ND comprise a core cadre who will oversee all establishment and operations in a force provider environment.

Force Provider does just that – soldiers either entering or departing a theater of operations, or perhaps returning from duty at “the front” will use the facilities offered, including hot meals and showers, clothing laundry and repair, entertainment or just relaxing in the temperature controlled tents – truly a home away from home.

Hundred of people passing through the air show are also getting a tour through an air conditioned force provider module, where the “hit” of the display is ... MREs!

“It’s just like regular applesauce,” said Staff Sgt. Melissa Steele, explaining the vacuum-sealed servings contained in the Army’s Meal – Ready-to-Eat. “And we do the same thing you guys do at lunch at school – we trade peanut butter or jelly for cheese spread.”

The comforts of the force provider are not lost to Sgt. 1ST Class Donald Szocki, another 542ND soldier.

“I was in Vietnam,” said Stocki, “and I know how it is in the field during a war. You need to be rested as a soldier – not tired and hungry all the time. The force provider really takes care of the troops.” Szocki is a Vietnam combat veteran who won the Bronze Star with “V” device for valor under enemy fire.

OK – so the airborne ballets here are the big draw, but that isn’t stopping people from stopping at the Army Reserve display, and getting a glimpse of how today’s soldier gets a well-deserved rest ... in the field, even potential future recruits like little “Joe.” ■



BEHIND THE WHEEL ...

Little “Joe” gets in the driver’s seat of a 542nd QM truck with help from Staff

Sgt. Christopher Sheridan. “Joe” didn’t really care to drive – he just liked the horn.



COOL INSIDE HERE ...

Staff Sgt. Melissa Steele explains to a family how the force provider modules create a city in the field for deployed soldiers.

all photos by Jack Gordon

Scud missile attack remembered “As it should be”

I too remember that night of the Scud missile attack. I was assigned with the 1ST Special Operations Wing, (USAF) stationed at King Fahd International Airport. I am a firefighter and that night my crew and I were at our vehicle dispersal point. When the base alert system activated, we quickly donned our chemical protective gear and ran for our bunker. As we reached the bunker we didn't run into it immediately (which goes against both our training and common sense). We scanned the night sky to see if we could locate the Scud, or if our patriots had launched.

As we looked upward, one of my crew saw something streaming high in the night sky over our position. As I looked at it, my first impression was that it looked something like a fireworks display. It had what looked like sparks trailing from the end. We all watched as it flew over the base, heading toward our southern position.

Shortly after, we heard a “boom” far off to our south, and a flash of what looked like lighting in the distance. Soon after the “all clear” signal was given, we returned to our vehicles' position, turned on the radio and picked up a broadcast that said a scud had hit the Dhahran Airbase area.

As we sat and listened, the reports eventually led to the announcement that the Scud had hit an occupied dormitory barracks, and confirmed there were injured and dead. Up to that point, we were filled with fear, excitement, and adrenaline — but as we listened, the mood quickly became somber and quiet with disbelief.

That was one of the experiences during the war that brought death into my reality. Others were the downing of the AC-130, call sign “Sprit 03,” and an F-111 cockpit module that had been recovered with signs of a burnt and bloodied stained interior.

Reading your article has reminded me of the night again. The visions, sounds and feelings of that night will be with me for the rest of my life, as it should be. And although I did not know any of the soldiers who lost their lives that night, their ultimate sacrifice will be with me for the rest of my life. As it should be.

Thank you!

Mark Wanner, TSgt., U.S. Air Force
Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas

NCO says “Step up – lead by example – be a soldier!”

I am responding to your editorial in the Spring 2001 *Checkerboard*. First of all, I completely agree with your views. I have had several assignments over my 17 years as a TPU member and as an AGR unit member. During my last assignment I was an instructor at an NCO academy. We discussed a lot of issues during the two weeks the soldiers attended the Primary Leadership Development Course and the Common Leader Phase of the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course. I had the pleasure of facilitating the leadership development of more than 2000 soldiers from the USAR, ARNG, and active Army ranks.

We discussed the same issues you wrote about in your editorial. Although at the time of my assignment “Consideration of Others” and other forms of sensitivity training were still in the development stages. Still, the same problems existed. My basic conclusion is that soldiers don't want to be coddled. They want to be treated like a soldier. They want tough challenging training, excellent leadership, and to be treated with dignity and respect.

All that needs to happen, in my opinion — every NCO simply needs to sit down and read TC 22-6 again, or maybe even for the first time. We all need to take a step back and absorb the meaning of leadership. What is it? Leadership as defined in TC 22-6, is the process of influencing others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction, and motivation.

All soldiers are different and require different leadership styles. Directing, participating, and delegating styles of leadership all have their place. As a leader, you must decide which style is required for a particular task or mission and soldier(s). Army leaders must understand we can't win wars by sitting in briefings and sensitivity classes.

We need tough realistic training — free from the distractions of the “politically-correct” world. Our soldiers are the best in the world and they deserve and should expect only the best from their leaders. Let's all step up to the plate and lead by example.

Sgt. 1ST Class Thomas Raymann
458TH Engineer Bn.
Johnstown, Pa.

(*Editor's Note: The Checkerboard welcomes your feedback.*)



Jack Gordon

IT'S GETTING THERE ...

Maj. Gen. Rodney D. Ruddock, members of the 99TH's senior command staff and engineer section, as well as representatives from Burchick Construction Co. toured the new headquarters facility still under construction. The building is scheduled for occupation this fall.

New HQ in “Moon”

by Jack Gordon

HQ, 99TH RSC, Oakdale, Pa. — This may be the final dateline from the Charles E. Kelly Support Facility, which has hosted the command — both as a U.S. Army Reserve Command and a Regional Support Command, for almost three decades. The new headquarters complex located in Moon Township is expected to be ready for business sometime in early October 2001.

After encountering difficulties in steel support structural elements due to the stadium building boom in nearby Pittsburgh, and an unusually hard winter, Burchick Construction Co. rallied strong and met the engineering schedule.

The complex will serve as the headquarters for the 99TH, the 339TH Combat Support Hospital, the 354TH Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, and a few other units yet to be designated. The central location to both the city of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh International Airport makes the new headquarters easily accessible to those who be conducting military business with the 99TH. ■

FORCE PROVIDER – 99TH unit is unique in mission of base support

by Jack Gordon

FORT POLK, La. – Since soldiers first began trudging through the woods, field living conditions have seldom been something to write home about. But from two troops first joining their shelter halves and draping ponchos over the tent too small for even a “pup,” let alone two full-grown, red-blooded and ready-to-fight American infantry soldiers ... things have come a long way. Take Force Provider ... for example.

The 542ND Quartermaster Company (Force Provider), Erie, Pa., is here running the final “shakedown” testing of the module before contractors take it into full production. The 542ND soldiers have been instrumental in shaking the “bugs” out of the system that epitomizes the finer art of field existence for today’s Army soldiers.

When fully operational, each module will serve 550 soldiers with everything from climate-controlled living quarters, dining and shower facilities, to laundry support, and exercise and entertainment areas.

The system – and mission of the 542ND – may include using the modules for theater reception of arriving troops, intermediate base staging, base camp, humanitarian aid or disaster relief. Whatever the mission, the 542ND’s soldiers are ready for it.

Here, they are supporting an element of engineers who recently returned from duty in Haiti – soldiers grateful for the high standard of living conditions they return to each night after sweating long days in the tropical Louisiana heat.

“We adjust to the needs of our ‘customers,’” said First Lt. Thomas Spagel. “Everything we do here – every service – is a function based on our mission to the soldier, from the gourmet kitchen to the temperature of the shower water to the clothing services.”

“Service,” is right. The floors of the modules may be constructed from steel, concrete or sheets of plywood, but the service falls nothing short of ... red carpet. ■



all photos by Jack Gordon

From top, clockwise:

EARLY MORNING RUN ...

The unit conducted PT daily, before sunrise ... just like the TV commercial said.

WHOSE IS WHOSE? ...

Sgt. Alicia Keys pins every garment to ensure soldier get their correct clothes back ... clean!

JUST LIKE HOME ...

Two hot meals are served daily in the temperature controlled dining facility, where the air is cool ... and the food hot!

CHECKING THE WATER ...

It's important that sanitation, including potable drinking water, is maintained at the Force Provider module by Staff Sgt. Jerry Rupert.

FORCE PROVIDER “CITY” ...

A soldier living in the Force Provider module crosses one of the “streets.”



